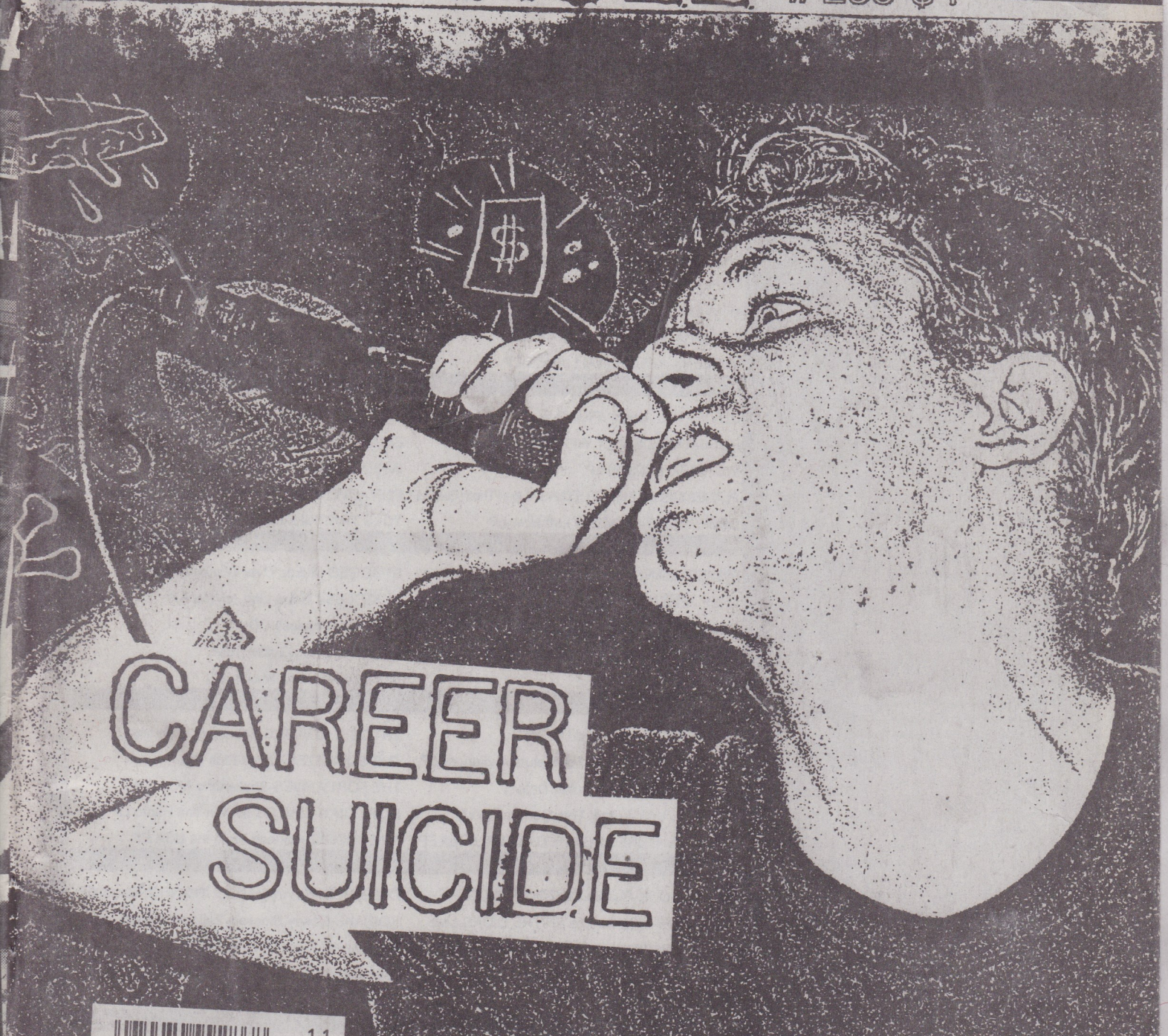
MAXIMUM ROCKNROLL

NOV. 2004
#258•$4



CAREER SUICIDE

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PLUS: NO FUCKER*THE REPOS*DOMINATRIX*ASHTRAY DEADSTOP*MIDNIGHT CREEPS*MICHALE GRAVES*THE DIFFS THE SHEMPS*ABI YO YO'S*CATHY WILKERSON & MORE!

MAXIMUMROCKNROLL

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•US Rate: $4 each. 6 issue sub for $22. 12 issue sub for $36. In California, send $4.34 for single copies, $23.87 for 6 months, or $39.06 for 12 months (tax).
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Let us know which issue to start with!

BACK ISSUES AVAILABLE:
#148, 150-151, 153-154, 156 pts. 1 & 2, 159-163, 166, 168-172, 174-175, 178-181, 184-210, 214-227, 229-256 are as stated above in subscription info.
See page after next.

DEADLINES FOR NEXT ISSUE:
Scene Reports: continuously, with photos!
Interviews: continuously, with photos!
Ad Reservations: call to make sure.

Ad Copy In (with payment):
by 15th of previous month.
Issue out: by 2nd week of following month.

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1/6 page: (2 3/8-x 5") $30
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1/3 page square: (5-x 4 7/8") $100
1/2 page: (7 1/4-x 5") $150
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See page 5 for foreign distribution info.

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TOP 10

For what it's worth (not much), here's some of the MRR crew's current Top 10 (or so...) lists of stuff we reviewed this month.

TIM BROOKS

- OBSERVERS-So What's Left Now LP
- SMALLTOWN/PRACTICE-split EP
- OUR TURN-Catch Your Breath EP
- WAR OF WORDS-12"
- VICTIMS-...In Blood LP
- SKITSYSTEM-Allt E Skit LP
- HUSBANDS/DEADLY WEAPONS-split EP
- SAVAGE LUCY-Forget This Generation LP
- COMPLETE CONTROL/CLIT 45-Live
- THE DICKS-Live

BOB COOKS

- DAS OATH-LP
- HONG KONG BLONDE-EP
- OBSERVERS-So What's Left Now LP
- VIOLENT MINDS-Riot EP
- SICK TERROR/MIHOEN-split EP
- KAMIKAZE-Seppuku EP
- STATE OF FEAR-Discography LP
- SKITSKYSTEM-Allt E Skit LP
- OUR TURN-Catch Your Breath EP
- Che Fest 2004

PAUL CURRAN

- SAVAGE LUCY-Forget This Generation LP
- OBSERVERS-So What's Left Now LP
- MIKA MIKO-Forensic Scientist EP
- PEKATRALATAK/TEKKEN-split EP
- BERZERK-AEIJN EP/ALLIANCE-LP
- TH'LOSIN STREAKS-Sounds of Violence LP
- PRACTICE/SMALLTOWN-split EP
- SOVIETTES–Alright/Plus One/WAR OR WORDS 12"
- ILLNESSES-I Wanna Die EP
- HUSBANDS/DEADLY WEAPONS-split EP

JONATHAN FLOYD

- SOVIETTES-Alright /Plus One
- HUSBANDS/DEADLY WEAPONS-split EP
- VICTIMS-...In Blood LP
- PLANES MISTAKEN FOR STARS - Up In Them Guts LP
- OBSERVERS-So What's Left Now LP
- KODIAKS-Cherry Blossom, Evil, and Alcohal EP
- SMALLTOWN/PRACTICE split EP
- SIRENS-Long Distance Calling EP
- RNR ADVENTURE KIDS/INTELLECTUALS-split EP
- TOYS THAT KILL-Live

JEFF HERRMANN

- PISSED JEANS-Throbbing Organ/Night Minutes
- THEE JENERATORS-CDEP
- EASY ACTION-Dead of Night/Worse for You
- MONOSHOCK-Runnin' Ape-Like CD
- SERMON-Volume CD
- STOOGES-Stukas Over Disneyland LP
- WOGGLES-I Got a Line on You EP
- ZOLAR X-Timeless CD
- 5678s-Woo Hoo/Guitar Date
- BORED!-Negative Waves CD

KENNY KAOS

- DEVIL DOLLS-All Dolled Up 2xEP
- CHRONICS-Suggested For Mature Audiences LP
- THE 5678s-Woo Hoo/Guitar Date
- SAVAGE LUCY-Forget This Generation LP
- RNR ADVENTURE KIDS/INTELLECTUALS split EP
- TH'LOSIN STREAKS-Sounds of Violence LP
- THE SOVIETTES-Alright/Plus One
- THE FORTY FIVES-Shake/One After 909
- MORTICIA'S LOVERS-Smash The Radio LP
- THE SHOCKS-Banned From the USA EP

CAROLYN KEDDY

- MONOSHOCK-Runnin CD/ZOLAR X-CD
- ILLNESSES-I Wanna Die EP/THE DICKS Live
- RNR ADVENTURE KIDS/INTELLECTUALS split EP
- EASY ACTION-Dead Of Night EP
- RENEGADE /FAF-split EP
- OBSERVERS-So What's Left LP /FRANTIC- Attaque EP
- KODIAKS-Cherry Blossom Evil and Alcohol EP
- MIKA MIKO-Forensic Scientist EP
- SAVAGE LUCY-Forget This GenerationLP
- LOSIN' STREAKS-Sounds of Violence LP

RAY LUJAN

- SMALLTOWN/PRACTICE-split EP
- SAVAGE LUCY–Forget This Generation LP
- GONE ALL SUMMER–Meanwhile CD
- SUPERCHUNK–Crowding Up DVD
- EDDIE HASKELLS –Dumpster Divin' CD
- DEMOB –Contractual CD/12 SUMMERS OLD-CD
- LOVE EQUALS DEATH–4 Notes CD
- POLITICAL ASYLUM–Winter CD
- SOVIETTES–Alright/Plus One
- OAOT'S-Typical CD/NEIGHBORS - Mobile EP

MAXIMUMROCKNROLL

TOP 10

Please send us records (2 copies of vinyl, if possible--one for MRR and one for reviewer), or CD-only release. See records section for where to send tapes & CD-Rs.

MITCH CARDWELL

- FRANTIC-Attaque EP
- MONOSHOCK-Runnin Ape Like CD
- THE TIME FLYS-both EPs
- RNR ADVENTURE KIDS/INTELLECTUALS-split EP
- TH'LOSIN STREAKS-Sounds of Violence LP

WILL RISK

- SOVIETTES-Alright/Plus One
- SHOCKS-Banned From the USA EP
- HIT ME BACK-Magic School Bus EP
- SHARK PANTS-LP boredom
- THE SPARK-Fashion Rats EP

ALLAN MCNAUGHTON

- CELEBRITY MURDERS-All Hail, Glacier! EP
- I ACCUSE-EP/FUNERAL SHOCK-LP
- MAD MACHIN -EP
- GASOLINE FIGHT CD
- PLANES MISTAKEN FOR STARS-Up In Them Guts LP
- DAS OATH-LP
- INTELLIGENCE-Boredom and Terror LP
- SMALLTOWN/PRACTICE-split EP
- HIT ME BACK-Magic School Bus-EP
- OBSERVERS-So What's Left Now-LP

GOLNAR NIKPOUR

- OBSERVERS-So What's Left Now LP and live
- DSB-Substitute CD
- VIOLENT MINDS-Riot EP
- FRANTIC-Attaque EP
- MELLAKKA-RIP CD
- AGHAST-Sacrificed on the Alter EP
- DEADLY WEAPONS/HUSBANDS-split EP
- VICTIMS-...In Blood LP
- RNR ADVENTURE KIDS/INTELLECTUALS-split EP
- THE DICKS-live

DONNA POOLE

- DEVIL DOLLS-All Dolled Up 2xEP
- MIKA MIKO-Forensic Scientist EP
- RNR ADVENTURE KIDS/INTELLECTUALS-split EP
- FRANTIC-Attaque EP
- PISSED JEANS-Throbbing Organ EP
- ILLNESSES-I Wanna Die EP
- EVIL ROBOT US-In Song and Dance EP
- TH'LOSIN STREAK-Sounds of Violence LP
- FAF / RENEGADES-split EP
- HIT ME BACK-Only The Magic Schoolbus EP

BRUCE ROEHRS

- ANTISEEN/LIMECELL/COCKNOOSE - live
- HELLSTOMPER/HAMMERLOCK/BULEMICS - live
- VICTIMS-In Blood LP
- VIOLENT MINDS-Riot EP
- VILLAINS -EP/DESTRUCTIONS END-Prepare to Die LP
- SKITSYSTEM-Allt E Skit LP/STATE OF FEAR-LP
- OBSERVERS-So What's Left Now LP
- AGGRA MAKABRA/DISPLACED-split LP
- OUR TURN-Catch Your Breath EP
- SICK TERROR/MIHOEN!-split EP

MIKE THORN

- OBSERVERS-So What's Left Now LP
- ALLIANCE-Disborder LP
- DSB-Substitute CD/KAKISTOCRACY-LP
- FRANTIC-Attaque EP
- KOBAYASHI/DISFACE-split EP
- OUR TURN-Catch Your Breath EP
- SMALLTOWN/PRACTICE-split EP
- UNDER PRESSURE-Habits EP
- WAR OF WORDS-12"/KASSIOPEIA EP
- VIOLENT MINDS-Riot EP

RYAN WELLS

- MONOSHOCK-Runnin Apelike CD
- INTELLIGENCE-Boredom and Terror LP
- TH'LOSIN STREAKS-Sounds of Violence LP
- RNR ADVENTURE KIDS/INTELLECTUALS split EP
- FRANTIC-Attaque EP
- RENEGADES/FAF-split EP
- ILLNESSES-I Wanna Die EP
- BORED-Negative Waves CD
- 5678s-Woo Hoo/Guitar Date
- PISSED JEANS-Throbbing Organ/Night Minutes

ZINE TOP TEN

- Behind The Times #3
- Boxcutter #5
- Broken Hipster #1
- Destroy #6
- Dumpsite #1
- Note A Game #3
- Ratcharge #1
- You Cannot Kill Us...
- The Rise and Fall #2
- Help, My Snowman's Burning #7

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#148/Sept '95. Soda Jerks, Toe Rag, Thorazine, Sacred Straight, Wizo, Opposition Party, Moody Jackson, Adversives, Opcion Crucial, Rebel, Rebel, Teen Idols, Walking Ruins.

#150/Nov '95. NY Loose, Snap-Her, Sick Boys, Splatterheads, Pipe, Pregnant Man, Final Conflict, Rawness, Stink, Goblins, Smellie Fingers.

#151/Dec '95. Lowdowns, My White Bread Mom, Queen B's, Electric Frankenstein, Turtlehead, Serpico, Trick Babys, In/Humanity, Stains, Varukers, Pist, Terrible Virtue.

#153/Feb '96. Snort, Hatchetface, Little Ugly Girls, ADZ, Oxymoron, NOTA, Stun Guns, Surfin' Turnips, Gutfiddle, Karen Monster, Dimestore Haloes.

#154/Mar '96. Motards, Subincision, Stisism, Donnas, Stallions, Count Backwards.

#156 pt 1/May '96. Public Toys, Crunch, Peter & The Test Tube Babies, Nails Of Hawaiian, Splash 4, Yawp!, Lifetime, Sickoids.

#156 pt 2/May '96. Australian Special: Beanflipper, Melancholy, Blitz Babiez, Crank, SubRosa, Mindsnare, TMT, H-Block, B-Sides, Fallout, Frenzal Rhomb, Lawnsmell, One Inch Punch, Chickenshit, No Deal.

#159/Aug '96. Smugglers, Tone Deaf Pig-Dogs, Too Many Records, Man Afraid, Blind Side, Vox Populi, Fun People, Fat, Drunk & Stupid, BrandNewUnit, Death Wish Kids.

#160/Sept '96. Automatics, Boycot, Toast, Morning Shakes, Mormons, John Q. Public, Sex Offenders, Ballgagger, Business, Apocalypse Babys, Good Riddance.

#161/Oct '96. Jet Bumpers, Steel Miners, Divisia, Lopo Drido, Red #9, Nothing Cool, Sink, Sires, Newtown Grunts.

#162/Nov '96. Phantom Surfers, Candy Snatchers, the Stain, National Guard, Torches To Rome, Restos Fosiles, Two Bo's Maniacs, Snuka, Redemtion 87, Torture Kitty.

#163/Dec '96. Last Sons of Krypton, Prostitutes, Wig Hat, Boys, Let It Rock, Enemy Soil, Vulcaneers, Half Empty, Zeros, Deadcats, Teen Idles.

#166/Mar '97. Walking Abortions, Hickey, '77 Spreads, Sanity Assassins, Cards In Spokes, Joey Tampon & The Toxic Shocks, Adjective Noun, Suicide King, Lenguas Armadas, Trauma, De Crew.

#169/June '97. Hand Skin, Cluster Bomb Unit, Jihad, Purgen, Speed Queens, Remission, Halflings, The Old Man, Deface.

#170/July '97. Bristle, Mine, Tedio Boys, The 4 Cockroaches, Absconded, Meanwhile. Broken, (Young) Pioneers, Hoodrat.

#171/Aug '97. Violent Society, Strychnine, Idiots, Knuckle Heads, Race Traitor, Patrick Grindstaff, Misanthropists.

#172/Sept '97. Withdrawals, Judgement, No Motiv, Oppressed Logic, Truents, Left For Dead, Yellowskin, Weird Lovemakers, Smash Your Face, Flatus, Straight Faced, Klaxon, X-It.

#174/Nov '97. Stratford Mercenaries, Lickity Split, Bladder, Piss Shivers, Barnhills, In/Humanity, Education theme issue.

#175/Dec '97. One Man Army, Those Unknown, Boiling Man, Piao Chong, Exploding Crustaceans, Last Year's Youth, Heartdrops, Dirty Burds, Dimestore Haloes.

#178/Mar '98. Economics issue. Forgotten Rebels, Dirtys, Josh Collins, American Steel, Letterbombs, Gyogun Rend's, Go-Devils, Room 41, Tone Deaf Pig Dogs, Garage Rats.

#179/April '98. Boy Sets Fire, Tres Kids, Idyls, Spat & The Guttersnipes, The Posers, Explosive Kate, Douche Flag.

#180/May '98. Reinforce, Discontent, TV Killers, Slack Action, Eyeliners, Mademoiselle, MK Ultraviolence, Haulin' Ass, 97a, Infiltrators, Jack Saints, Stray Bullets.

#181/June '98. Grapefruit, Druggies, DDI, Bonecrusher, Normals, All Bets Off, Stiletto Boys, Summerjack, Cell Block 5.

#184/Sept '98. Absentees, Devoid of Faith, UXA, Umlaut, Four Letter Word, Streetwalkin' Cheetahs, Ricanstruction, Libertine, Indecision, Snarkout Boys.

#185/Oct '98. Traitors, Wimpy Dicks, Armed & Hammered, Dylan McKays, NME, Tezacrifco, Worm, Roswells, Raxola, Beatnik Termites.

#186/Nov '98. Registrators, August Spies, Marilyn's Vitamins, Chinese Love Beads.

#187/Dec '98. Real Kids, Sawn Off, Cretins, Spider Cunts, Heroines, Third Party, No Class, Skabs.

#188/Jan '99. Stitches, Neighbors, Mansfields, Real Swinger, Marauders, Mark Bruback, Mars Moles, DOA.

#189/Feb '99. Monster X, Peter & the Test Tube Babies, Steam Pig, Maurauders, Yakuza, Dead Beat, Halfways, Hot Rod Honeys, DeRita Sisters.

#190/Mar '99. John Holstrom, Powerhouse, Brezhnev, Slappy, Black Pumpkin, Smartbomb ca, Wanda Chrome, Long Gones, Smogtown, Halfways, Tilt.

#191/April '99. Murder Suicide Pact, Kil Kare, Dudman, Super Hi-Fives, Better Than Elvis DJs, Pet Peeves, Loose Ends, Slingshot Episode.

#192/May '99. Los Crudos, Burning Kitchen, Henry Fiat's Open Sore, Polythene, Kangaroo Recs.

#193/June '99. Munster Recs, DS-13, Safety Pins, Pussycats, Piolines, False Alarm, Darlington, Bad Stain, Bodies, Houseboy, Mullets.

#194/July '99. Deathreat, Last Match, God Hates Computers, Fokkewolf, Flesh Eating Creeps, Aside, Hoppin' Mad, Kid Dynamite, Thee Outcasts.

#195/Aug '99. Moral Crux, RC5, Have Nots, Ill Tempered, Dysentery, Greg Higgins, Revlons, Larry & the Gonowheres..

#196/Sept '99. Hopscotch, Catharsis, Orchid, The Pricks, Grissle, Product X, Reaching Forward, Emerge, Third Degree, "Epicenter Zone '90-'99".

#197/Oct '99. Reducers SF, Lower Class Brats, Reactor 7, TheGodsHateKansas, Futuro Incierto, Showcase Showdown, Waifle, Flat Earth Recs.

#198/Nov '99. Hail Mary, Pressure Point, Bump 'N Uglies, The Victims, A//Political, Outlast

#199/Dec '99. Locust, Ratos de Porao, USV, Razlog Za, G-3, Swarm, WHN?, Mt. St. Helens, Black Cat Music, Enemy Soil.

#200/Jan '00. American Steel, Curse, Gee Vaucher, Hers Never Existed, Aaron Cometbus, Active distro, Toxic Narcotic, MRR catalogue #100-200.

#201/Feb '00. Beerzone, Towards An End, Daybreak, "Best Punk Singles of the '90s," the WTO riots in Seattle.

#202/March '00. KTMWQ, Real Estate Fraud, Strike Out, Broken Rekids, the Haggard, GC5, Gore Gore Girls, the Catheters.

#203/April '00. Spazz, Slang, *Slug & Lettuce* zine, *Suburban Voice* zine, As We Once Were, Red Angel Dragnet, Four Letter Words, Slampt Records, the Wednesdays, the Fuses.

#204/May '00. Cocksparrer, Talk Is Poison, Red Scare, Put Downs, Out Cold, Geraldine, Michael Knight, CBGaV, Pillage People.

#205/June '00. Punks With Kids special. Skudz, 50 Million, Legion, Wilbur Cobb, Coalition.

#206/July '00. Drunk, ESL, Ambition Mission, Lord High Fixers, Cripple Bastards, Dig Dug, Federation X, Amulet, Valentine Killers.

#207/Aug '00. Harum Scarum, Raw Power, Unseen, Pekinska Patka, Hudson Falcons, Dementia 13, Confine, Allergic to Whores.

#208/Sept '00. Le Shok, the Commies, the Chemo Kids, Day of Mourning, Affront, Diaspora, Whippersnapper, Hopeless/Sub City, Prank, Countdown to Oblivion

#209/Oct '00. Loose Lips, Godstomper, Peace of Mind, FYP, I Farm, Annalise, Cattle Decapitation, Riot/Clone.

#210/Nov '00. J Church, Profane Existence, Pezz, Pre-Teens, Templars, This Machine Kills, Subtonix, OB.

#214/Mar '01. Crispus Attucks, Fetish, Lifes Halt, Mr. Roboto, Dream Dates, Satan McNugget, Havoc, Briefs.

#215/April '01. No Means No, Vitamin X, Injections, Y, Dils, Last In Line, Don Austin, Deranged Records

#216/May '01. Propagándhi, Angelic Upstarts, Discordance Axis, Ruination, Photographer: Chris Boarts, Strap-Ons, Lynnards Innards

#217/June '01. Joey Ramone R.I.P., Tear It Up, Skitsystem, The Pattern, CrimethInc., Esperanza, The Chicago Blackout, Photographer: Ace

#218/July '01. Guyana Punchline, Les Sexareenos, The Devil Is Electric, Red Monkey, White Collar Crime, Forca Macabra, The Ataris, Suicide, The Mob

#219/Aug '01. "Fix It!" cycling article, Crucial Unit, Lost Sounds, Lombardies, Flowers in the Dustbin pt. 1, Casualties, Resinators, *P.U.N.K.*, Slaughter & the Dogs, Anti-Flag, Dontcares, S'Bitch.

#220/Sep '01. Latin American Issue. Aubuso Sonoro, Anti-Todo, Fuerza X, Apatia No, Manganzoids, Demencia, Sick Terror, Tocatta y Bulla, NTN, Argies, Reconcile, Anti-Korpus, Ruido De Odio, Los Pepiniyos, Rebelion Disidente, Brazil Scum , Kim Bae Photo Essay.

#221/Oct '01. Tales from the G8 Summit, Reflections, Soophie Nun Squad, Totalitär, True North, Wontons, Sin Dios, Bottles & Skulls, Scarred For Life, Flowers in the Dustbin pt. 2, Remains of the Day, Ritchie Whites, B'67.

#222/Nov '01. Dios Hastio, Tragedy, Four Letter Word, *Salad Days* author Charles Romalotti, Very Metal, Maurice's Little Bastards, the Rotters, MDC Brazilian tour diary, the Cravats, JR Ewing, Dutch scene report, extended news section, "Globalization Rhetoric & Reality,"

#223/Dec '01. "US Policy in the Middle East," "Revisiting 1948," Manifesto Jukebox, Good Riddance, Pokers, Viimenen Kolonna, Bluebloods, Vitamin X tour diary, Flakes, Pg. 99, the Mob, 7 Days of Samsara.

#224/Jan '02. "Legislation Since Sept. 11," Rendencion 9.11, Metro Youth, Severed Head of State, Piranhas, Paraf, Backstabbers, Inc, An Albatross, Citizen Fish Tour, SPAM Records, the Virus, Action Time.

#225/Feb '02. Lengua Armada, Breaker Breaker, 3 Yrs. Down, Scrotum Grinder, Turun Tauti, Flux Of Pink Indians, Holding On, Pauki, 86'd, See You In Hell, Red Light Sting, Nazis From Mars, Scare Tactic.

#226/Mar '02. Queer punk special issue. Vaseline, Quails, Skinjobs, Italian queer punk report, Vaginal Davis, Feelings on a Grid, Sissies, Scott Free, Dumba, Columns.

#227/Apr '02. Bellrays, Rhinos, Wasted, Kristofer Pasanen, Business, Assert, DS 13 tour report, Life Set Struggle, Iowaska, Zounds.

#229/June '02. Countdown To Putsch, The Awakening, Dave Hill Distribution, Holier Than Thou, Kill Devil Hills, Sound Of Failure, E.T.A., Nubs, Les Baton Rouge, New Disorder Records, Career Suicide, Swellbellys, The Sinyx.

#230/July '02. Bitchin', Redencion 911, Phantom Limbs, Secretions, Holy Molar, Sharp Knife, Mighty John Waynes, A Global Threat, Groovie Ghoulies, Reproach, Annie Anxiety.

#231/Aug '02. Epoxies, Puppy Vs. Dyslexia, Koro, Blocko, Amdi Petersen's Armé, Piss & Vinegar Zine, Schizophrenic Records, Toys That Kill, Give Us Barabbas, Dirt.

#232/Sept '02. "No Future" article, Lost, Fartz, Sell Outs, Razors Edge, Stakeout, Dillinger Four, All or Nothing HC, Fleshies, Bridge Nine Records, Akashic Books, Liberty.

#233/Oct '02. "All Ages" article, Scholastic Deth, Runnamucks, Sinners & Saints, Panic, Gasolheads, Jewws, Futures, Michael Landon's Commandos, Storm the Tower, Against Me!, Balance of Terror, Class Assassins, Spazm 151.

#234/Nov '02. Snobs, What Happens Next? Brazilian tour, The Oath, Radio 4, Feederz, Charm City Suicides, Selfish, Riot 99, End On End, Peawees, Born/Dead.

#235/Dec '02. Anti-war Special Issue. Anti-war guest columns. Anti-war scene reports. Articles: "Reading for Democracy," "War on Iraq?" "Unfinished American Revolution," Resource Guide, "US Involvement in Iraq,""Axis of Empire." Long Island DIY Scene, What Happens Next? Brazilian tour part 2, Smalltown, Kylesa, Crash & Burn.

#236/Jan '03. Mr. California & State Police, Iron Lung, Riff Randells, Chainsaw, *Artcore*, Latterman, Travis Cut, Phenomenauts, Pretty Little Flower, X-Cretas.

#237/Feb '03. Top Ten Records of 2002, "Music as a Weapon: Artists in Wartime," Dirt Bike Annie, Let It Burn, Stockyard Stoics, King Khan & Shrines, 625 Records, Feast Or Famine, Rudimentary Peni, Coachwhips, Self Defense.

#238/Mar '03. World Burns To Death, Chronics, Vilently Ill, Dystopia, Pilger, Exotic Fever, Brezhnev, R.A.M.B.O., Blown To Bits, Put To Shame, Deconditioned, This Bike Is A Pipe Bomb, Monsters.

#239/Apr '03. Romanian D-beat, Meconium Records, Amazombies, Abandoned Hearts Club, Mike V. & the Rats, Nicki Sicki, Bigamists, Bolivia article, Negatives, Kuolema, Defiance.

#240/May '03. I Quit, Apers, Headless Horsemen, Lesser of Two, Barse, Nightmare, Music Zine Roundtable, Exploding Hearts, Flesh Packs, Blacklist Brigade.

#241/June '03. Tyrades, Lumbergh, The Stand By Me, New Mexican Disaster Squad, Cut the Shit, Libertinagem, 17th Class, the Ends, He Who Corrupts, Deathbag, Cria Cuervos.

#242/July '03. Pensacola and San Francisco punk protest reports, John Wilkes Booze, Anfo, Bob Suren, Migra Violenta, Jackson 8, *Snakepit* zine, Krigshot, the Rites, Deadfall.

#243/Aug '03. "Media Alliance and the FCC," Striking Distance, Malcontents, Invisible City, Books Lie, Charm City Art Space, Hopeless Dregs of Humanity, I Shot Cyrus, Sunday Morning Einsteins, What the Kids Want, Onion Flavored Rings.

#244/Sept '03. None More Black, Deadline, Rai Ko Ris, Boxed In, Exploding Hearts, Raving Mojos, Blackout Terror, Morticia's Lovers, Thee Fine Lines, *Trust* zine.

#245/Oct '03. No Time Left, Riistetyt, Intense Youth, The Gimmies, Ass End Offend, Artimus Pyle, La Fraction, Kung Fu Rick, The Horror.

#246/Nov '03. Punk & Resistance in Israel, Letters from Palestine, No Choice, FM Knives, Bury the Living, Marked Men, The Dirty Burds, Provoked.

#247/Dec '03. DSB, The Boils, Popular Shapes, Phoenix Foundation, Bathtub Shitter, Meet the Virus, Cropknox, "Punk Babies on Tour" Article.

#248/Jan '04. Discharge, Superhelicopter, Jed Whitey, Black Friday '29, Find Him And Kill Him, The Lids, Impratical Cockpit, Face Up To It, History Of Maximum Rocknroll Radio.

#249/Feb '04. From Ashes Rise, Hagar the Womb, This Is My Fist, Skip Jensen, Gride, Katy Otto/Mike Taylor Dialogue, John Yates, Pointing Finger.

#250/Mar '04. Best Records of 2003, Miami FTAA protests, Clorox Girls, FIYA, "La Villita: Chicago Pilsen Scene," Terminus Victor, Restarts, Damage Done, Knights of New Crusade.

#251/April '04 The Fuse!, Väkivaltaa, Modern Machines, Microcosm, Migra Violenta Euro tour diary, Allegiance, Neurotic Swingers, Xavier Lepaige Photos, Le Scrawl, Vrah

#252/May '04 Fucked Up, Firestarter, Inepsy, Laukaus, Great Clearing Off, Radio Reelers, Extreme Noise Records, 46 Short, The State, John The Baker, Free Verse, Chrystaei Branchaw photos, SE Asia, Germany, Iceland.

#253/June '04 Sweet J.A.P., Gorilla Angreb, Vöetsek, Minority Blues Band, Scruvy Dogs, Molotov Cocktail, Kidnappers, Schifosi, King Ly Chee, YDI, Texas, Germany, UK, New Hampshire

#254/July '04 No Hope For The Kids, Dropdead, Diskords, Breakfast, Asschapel, I Excuse, Strung Up, To Hell & Back, Four Eyes, Lamant, Gammits MW, Portland, Boston, Germany

#255/August '04 Punks Not Dead, Reagan Is Special Issue. Leatherface, Get It Away, The Hatepinks, Keen Monkey Work, New York City, South Dakota, Czech Republic, Philippines, Russia.

#256/September '04 The Observers, Witchhunt, Annihilation Time, Zann, Eskapo, FxPxO, Haymarket Riot, Fourth Rotor, Les Georges Lenigrad, Texas scene, Newfoundland scene, Indiana scene, and England scene.

#257/October '04 Tne Election Issue, Jesse Townley, Matt Gonzalez, Rattus, Fighting Dogs, Hero Dishonest, Kickz, The Boss Martians, Reactionary Three, Slovakia, Australia, South Wales, South East Asia, and more!

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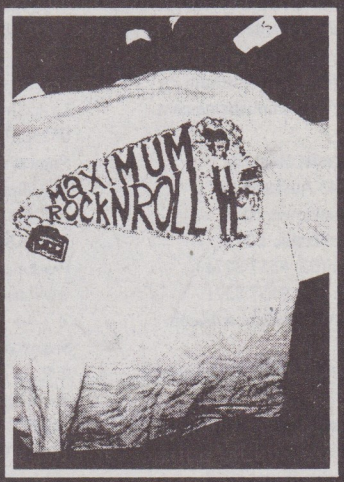

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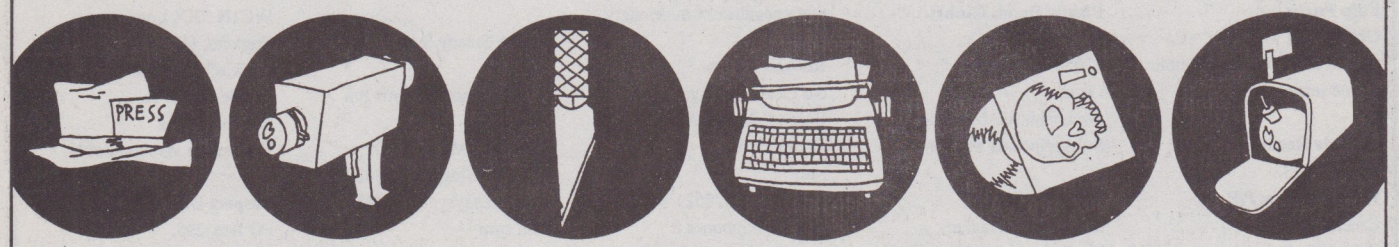

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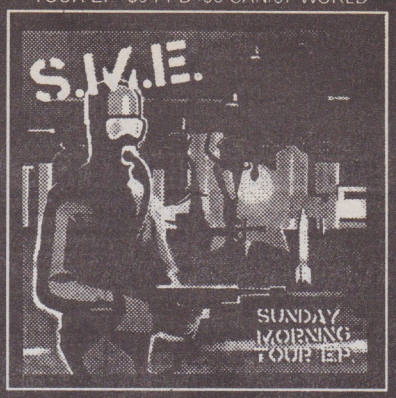

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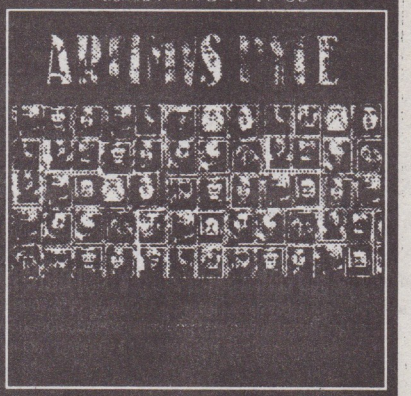

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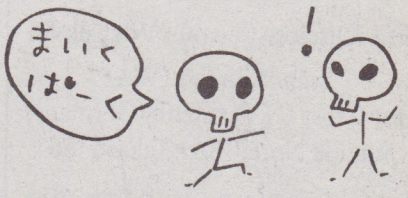

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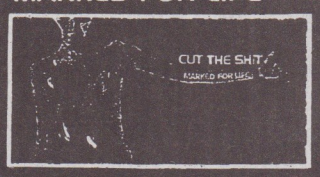

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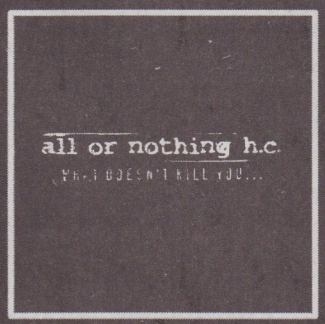

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LETTERS

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Maxi Rocker—

Yo! It's Karl Bakla the jogging Sri Lankan hard core dude! Got some bad news for you, last night I wrote you a great letter while I was drunk, I had 18 cans of Coors Light in my system & I was on letter "V" on the alphabet record listening session (by the way that's when you pick out 26 records & listen to them in alphabetical order). I was getting close to the letter "Z", which was gonna be a ZOINKS record, when a dude named Papapunk emailed me a picture of a penis someone chopped off, sure I was grateful but I some how deleted my great drunk rant. So I'm gonna do this a little different I'll do it sober.

Well, the first thing I want to write about is when I was in Huntington Beach with my kids doing the yuppie punk rock thing, you know eating burritos at Fred's, buying records at Vinyl Solution, looking at the crap at the Electric Chair, & showing off my beer gut, tattoos, & piercings to poor innocent bystanders on the beach. As my punk rock family was enjoying just being the odd balls we are on a beautiful day we came across a sticker on a news paper stand that read Klobber Krew: Promoting Positive Living Aggressively, we joked about this sticker, wondering if this was a gang of thugs who beat up fat fucks like Mean Steve (of the ONE LIFE CREW) if they catch him eating a Blizzard at Dairy Queen, but joking a side we were pretty sure it was a straight edge club. So we get back home to Las Vegas, but not without stopping by the Dr. Strange Record Store to buy a few records (I bought an Up Front record if you are curious). While back in the Silver State, where we're always Battle Born I typed up Klobber Krew in a search engine & it brought up all sorts of stuff about how these guys are straight edge pussies, they love to Rusty Trombone each other, & most of all they love to be Cheesed Danished. For those that are stupid a Rusty Trombone is when someone tosses your salad while giving you a reach around & a Cheese Danish is when someone fills your ear canal with cum. Well, the frightening thing is when I was researching the Klobber Krew I came across a web sight that list people who have broken the edge, it also lets you click on your state to find out who has lost the edge where you live. Also you can submit people you know have lost the edge. Out of curiosity I clicked on Nevada & came across a few people I've met before. It really disturbed me because the people they single out, have been nice to me the few times I've chit chatted with them & now there is this web sight hinting it's OK to beat these guys up, fuck! If this is what Hard Core has become count me the fuck out! I thought we had bigger fish to fry. I think these straight edge fuckers need to go drinking with me at the Badlands. They will learn the joys of sleeping with someone & not knowing if it's a man or women until the next time you see them, & of course there is reason number one to drink, the chance you might time travel. A few years ago I got really drunk & when I sobered up it was like six months later. I'm not to sure what happened in those missing six months but I came out of it with a big time promotion at my job & I was homeless, because I also found out it's O.K. to sleep with other people when you are drunk, but Bethanator wasn't hip to that. She was so pissed because she lets me sleep with anyone I want anyways, but when you're drunk it's so much more fun to do it behind people's back. So guess what? She kicked me out so she could hump some skinhead who looks like Pig Champion, but get this, he wasn't even cool enough to know who Poison Idea was. But this is where the story gets good I showed them all, I got drunk again, but this time I got really drunk for like two years straight, I was having mad orgies, getting arrested for being thug life, lifting weights, getting Koval Lane tattoos, I was now wearing suits to work, my record collection doubled, I some how moved to Green Valley, & the Bethanator was back & she was bringin' the kids back with her. So the moral to this story is Faded Grey is good, don't beat them up, & most of all time travel rocks don't knock it till you try it.

Also on *MRR* related things this is a shout out to all the folks who do *MRR*. I got to thank you for not covering bands like 18 Visions, Atreyu, Avenged Seven Fold, etc. it's not like I have a problem with these bands, shit I love Converge. But I like punk to be kept real. As I was reading the latest issue of *AMP* & producing Spicy Sausage Frappacino from my butt, I had a hard time telling which bands were punk & which ones were crap. I don't know if it was my poop's vapors clogging my judgment but I was starting to think none of the bands covered were punk. I was longing for *MRR*, where you can always see my letters, punk rock pure & simple, 1,2,3,4, the way we fucking like it. O.K. enough kissing ass, so when is Ann R. Key coming back? I loved that column. Also to all the bands that complain that *MRR* didn't listen to your whole album or you got a bad review, well let me tell you the reason for this. It's because your band sucks & you should break up.

Gotta go, but since you were wondering. When I was listening to records last night letter "P" was done By PEGBOY & it was their EP Four, wow that's a good record. "F" is for the band FUCKFACE whose record was released by Six Weeks.

One last thing when I was listen to "O" OPERATION IVY's Energy last night I rediscovered the song Unity, shit does that song sound so good right now. *Stop This War* that lyric sums it all up for me.

—Karl Bakla

Hey Everybody—

This is the story of the blown to bits tragedy...we escaped New Orleans early in anticipation of escaping hurricane Ivan. We drove out with no problems... Next day we had played a show in Memphis with Bury The Living and all had gone well...next day we took off for Baltimore, knowing that we would have to stay somewhere in-between. We drove through some very intense rain and decided after nine hours that we couldn't drive anymore. We pulled over at the next motel, near Asheville, NC. At about 1am the rain was coming down so hard that I took one last out the 1st floor motel room because it was so intense and saw the water at the curb just outside our door. Literally within 30 seconds the water had surged over the curb and into the room. We barely had time to get our sleeping bags and other gear off of the floor to run to the second floor. By the time we had run upstairs (only a two story building), the water had risen dramatically, in fact the water had risen five feet in five minutes. Cars were literally floating by, our van was completely inundated

and all our equipment was inside...the water had risen to about an inch below the roof. I know all of this sucks but there is something that struck all of us. We almost died. None of us realized this until after the fact. The water was rising and we were trapped on the 2nd floor with about 24 people. The sheriff first brought in a boat to rescue all of us but it was too small to handle the current, so they were just standing on the other side of the creek (nearby the motel) kind of panicking. Eventually they brought in another bigger more powerful boat and rescued the majority of the people...but the three of us and about three other men were the last in line because of course elders, women, and children go first, (besides the fact the man next door to us had a heart attack after waking up with the water lapping up over his mattress). We were standing there watching the water rise to with in a foot of the second floor balcony. And then the firemen yelled the foundation of the building is being eroded, we freaked out! I had a cell phone and called my mother and father, I had to talk to them because I literally though I was going to die. It was the scariest thing I have ever gone through in my entire life, and I will never ever forget what happened, it is too much too describe (rushing raging river, crying baby's, old people, etc). We stayed in a red cross shelter that night and had to figure out how to deal with our van and all our equipment, people were so nice...the local paper and radio station came and interviewed us and we got free shoes and food and a warm dry place to sleep. The equipment literally means nothing after this. 8 people died in the town that night, we were very lucky. We have had a very supportive response to this terrible incident and that is so heartening to see people come together and be so tight nit and be there for us. We can't express enough our gratitude for all of you and every one that has been there for us

Thank you all,

—Blown To Bits

deadyuppie@hotmail.com

Hey *MRR*—

I've never really liked CrimethInc, and last month's column on mental illness was especially ridiculous. I'm sure that if you have mild or moderate anxiety or depression there are ways to help yourself, and you might use some of their suggestions. But if you have something severe like schizophrenia, where you're hearing and seeing things that aren't there, I doubt making some lists and doing breathing exercises is going to make things any better. Then later on they say you shouldn't sell your plasma and it's a "grotesque example of an exploitative industry literally sucking the life out of the poor". Obviously if you have to sell your plasma to survive it's a pretty sad situation, but otherwise how is voluntarily donating plasma to help sick or injured people wrong, or exploitative of anyone? Otherwise it was a great issue, keep it up.

—Anna X

zombiegogodancer@hotmail.com

Dear *MRR*—

Some "punks" are pushing hard for Kerry on the web and in the streets. If *MRR* is truly trying to promote voter awareness, I think your readers should be exposed to the various opinions, at least mine!

There are droves of punks here in the NY/NJ area are behind Bush and hate Kerry. You Kerry-crazed punks are probably young guys/gals who don't understand that the basic punk ideas are embodied in conservative politics (sorta). I dare anyone to listen to Rush Limbaugh and not be amused by his tirades at Yugo-driving, left-wing wealth-redistributors.

My god, punks are *anti*-hippie, *anti*-Government, *pro*-freedom and, most of all, punks believe in the DIY ideal. Do It Yourself is embodied in the neo-conservative philosophy of self-dependence and a hatred of government involvement in one's life. The GOP is for small government, cutting government and freeing up people from dependency on government. Go to Western Europe and see what socialism does: It ruins dreams and ambition. Here in NYC we see how foreigners come from left wing nations and bloom here in the freedom of a capitalist nation where you can be what you dream.

Don't talk about religion and its dire threat! I heard all that 20 years ago and the Moral Majority turned out to be nothing. The Iraq War? It's what terrorism prevention looks like!

Punk is aggressive and assertive and confident. Liberals are about political correctness, caring about "offending," and the endless labeling of people. I could go on but I'm glad I grew up in the hardcore punk days, when punks would throw up at a wimpy dweeb like Kerry. Today's punks sound like wannabe hippies who would hug terrorists and trees.

Bush is no genius. Bush is no punk, but he might hang in the back and buy a beer for Wattie to inquire how he makes his hair stand up so rigidly. Kerry would pass a law against loud music and shut down gigs where the sound board guy wasn't paid union wages.

When did you "punks" gone so soft?

—ChazOLDpunk

C. Seymour

cjsx@msn.com

New York, NY

Chaz—

Wow, where do I even begin with this one? I think that it's pretty safe to say that most of us here at MRR *would cringe at being called liberals, and I don't think that many of us are pushing too hard for a Kerry presidency, but I'll respond to some points you make anyway.*

Insofar as punk is a counter-culture based on resistance to mainstream values, it's hard for me to make the leap that "the basic punk ideas are embodied in conservative politics." Are perpetual war, a racist penal system, wild standard-of-living discrepancies between rich and poor, and aggressive imperialist foreign-policy punk? I don't think so. Try creative and ethical politics and the spirit of resistance coupled with a keen ability to have fun, fun, fun, and you might be a little closer.

I'm from New York too, and I bet that if you look a little closer at the place you call home, or ask your neighbors in East New York, Crown Heights, or the South Bronx if they agree with your idyllic vision of that city, they'd laugh in your face. To be sure, I love New York but it's hardly a place where all people can expect to "bloom" or where anything goes for anyone who cares to make the effort. In that sense, it is like the rest of this country; we are all suffering the effects of poverty, homelessness, poor educational resources, inadequate health care, and war.

As for punk rock, you're right that it's aggressive, assertive, and confident, but I would like to think that the punk has something else going for it as well: it's intelligent, and not about to fall prey to the bone-headed right-wing politics that have gripped so many here in the United States and the world. Thanks for your letter, and up the punx,

—Golnar

Dear writers and creators of *MRR*—

Hello. Thank you for all the work that your publication does for punk rock, social justice, and to fight oppression.

In July 2005, Portland, Oregon will host the 'A World Beyond Capitalism' (AWBC) conference. This conference is not guided by any political organization or government institution. I am writing to you on behalf of the organizers of that conference. We are a small group of independent individuals trying to help network the movement to make the world a better place.

I am writing to you in hopes that you will place one of our announcements into your publication. You see, we are greatly in need of many, many volunteers to help us to achieve many of the multilingual, multi-alliance building goals that we have. You can read more about those goals here: www.lfhniivaaaa.info/awbcgoals.html

A World Beyond Capitalism Conference—July 22-24, 2005. Portland,

Oregon. A multi-lingual, multi-racial alliance-building conference. This conference will create alliances in a manner that transcends the boundaries of the English Language, Race, Class, Gender, Age, Ability, Sexual Orientation, and Endless Theory. Volunteers of all backgrounds worldwide, including work-from-home or bilingual volunteers, are greatly needed. Through love, solidarity and international outreach, the unreachable is achievable. A World Beyond Capitalism! To join our email list and volunteer bulletin board please email: awbcbbupdates@lfhniivaaaa.info

If you have any questions, please feel free to ask. With solidarity, love and freedom for all,

—JL

A World Beyond Capitalism conference organizing team member

awbc-organizers@awbc.lfhniivaaaa.info

www.awbc.lfhniivaaaa.info

Dear *MRR*—

Those of us fortunate enough to be introduced to punk culture understand that punk rock and beer can be the bedrock of a fantastic life style. I've based more than half of my own life on punk rock and beer and it has been a truly satisfying experience. When I was about 23 I announced that "As long as I have beer, no matter what happens, I will *always* be happy!" Of course, when I was in my twenties I could drink all night at a show, sleep three hours, go to work and then come home and spend hours working on my zine before going out and doing it all over again. At the time, I honestly thought I would continue that lifestyle into my forties. Unfortunately, I discovered there was a downside. As I got older, I started to get hangovers and the older I got the longer and more debilitating my hangovers became. When I say hangover I'm not talking about a bad headache. A large glass of water and an ibuprofen can help that. I'm talking about hangovers where my skin felt like it was turning inside out, sleep was impossible, physical activity was never invigorating, and I lacked the concentration required to read or write. Ultimately, the debilitating hangovers were a big part of what lead to the end of my zine and record label. I was out of the scene, reduced to attending an occasional show. Lucky for me, I didn't seek a new path in life. Quit drinking? Fuck that, what's the point? I *love* drinking. I knew there was a better answer. I tried to stay involved in punk rock simply as a consumer and I read MRR every month. Ultimately, that's where I found my answer.

A couple years ago MRR reviewed a book called *Drink As Much As You Want and Live Longer: The Intelligent Person's Guide to Healthy Drinking* by Frederick M. Beyerlein. It's the kind of underground book I may have never heard of if not for the review in MRR and I'd hate to think of where I'd be today without it. There are many hangover cures, but Beyerlein is a nutritionist working at Sutter Medical Center in Sacramento who did genuine research. I took notes as I read his book then followed the advice. Eventually I decided the Vitamin B and liver supplements were the most important part for me. The diet advice I only half followed (no red meat while drinking). The results were fantastic. I started telling friends about it and some of them tried it. Before reading the book, one of my friends was drinking a lot, and then drinking off his hangovers, but that lead to seizers when he stopped drinking. He was a big convert and started preaching Beyerlein's book like I did. Another friend of mine just started to take the supplements because he wanted to be able to go to the gym and workout the morning after a binge. Others didn't care enough to give it a try or didn't want to spend the money on supplements. That's great, if it's not a serious problem then you may not need it but if you typically drink to oblivion, it may eventually catch up to you when you hit your thirties. Even then, hangovers may not bother you because you can afford to sit around in front of the TV all weekend. However if you are like me and have a daughter who is guaranteed to jostle you out of bed at 6:30am Saturday mornings, no matter how late you got in, the information is invaluable. Actually, right now it's a weeknight; the kids are asleep and I'm on my 4th E.J. Phair Marzen as I listen to MRR radio. (Mike Thorn's set rocks as always.) In five hours I will be lugging around 30 pound buckets of Hypochlorite while wearing chest high waders and a respirator in 90 degree heat. I'm not concerned about having to work with a hangover. I've taken my supplements and a couple of Jimmy Dean omelets defrosting in the fridge will get me going in the morning. Life is good. Three years ago at the Vegas Shakedown I didn't think so. I missed a lot of the bands because I was too busy recovering from alcohol consumption in my hotel room. I knew my hangovers were getting worse, but that had never happened before. I thought age had caught up to me, and it sucked. I didn't realize I only needed to make some minor changes to my drinking habits. The only advice people usually get about drinking is to cut back or stop altogether. If you love drinking, but find yourself increasingly waking up with sickening and intense hangovers then I highly recommend Beyerlein's book.

I've been telling any drinker who will listen this story for a while now. One of these people was Brad Stoddard, the crack smoking Yale grad son of a leather daddy who used to do Monitor Records and put out records by Moral Crux, The Process and that impossible to find Hickey/ All You Can Eat split 7". He was also a drummer in a number of San Jose bands and the minister at my wedding. After hearing me and a couple of other people recommend Beyerlein's book Brad decided to contact the author and worked with him to formulate a drinker's kit. If you go to www.21stcenturydrinker.com you'll find his supplement package. Don't write to him to ask for the Hickey/ AYCE 7 inch. He doesn't have any left.

—Aaron Muentz

www.proberecords.com

Howdy—

I am writing this letter to express my outrage, at this whole voting thing I keep hearing of. In the first place we should have all learned last election that our votes are not worth a shit. How else was George W. able to cheat his way into office? Are people really blind enough to believe that we live in a democracy? It is the person who is backed by the corporations that gets the election, or maybe I am just paranoid.

In the second place, even if our vote did count, why should we cast it? I pledge no allegiance to this country. I think Thoreau was right when he said, "All voting is a sort of gaming, like checkers or backgammon, with a slight moral tinge to it, a playing with right and wrong, with moral questions; and betting naturally accompanies it. The character of the voters is not staked. I cast my vote, perchance, as I think right; but I am not vitally concerned that that right should prevail. I am willing to leave it to the majority. Its obligation, therefore, never exceeds that of expediency."

This voting shit makes no sense to me. It does no good in my eyes.

In closing, please somebody, write me! Prison is lonely, and I need some pen pals. I am losing my mind here. Take it easy.

—Kevin Machado V-14538

6246 Lambie Road

Suisun City, CA 94585

Dear *MRR*—

I would like to take this opportunity to address an incident that happened last night, 9/9/04, here in Phoenix. I am the bassist in a local act called ETTS. We were asked by a local promoter to open a show by the Swedish crust band, Skitsystem. Normally we are more at home playing alongside such bands as Lord Gore, or Impaled, but I

guess the promoter felt that us being on the bill would add some humor and levity to an otherwise serious political punk show. We are a grindcore band whose lyrics are meant to poke fun at some of the excesses of the gore grind scene, and also at some of the people in the punk scene who take themselves far too seriously. We do go out of our way to offend some people, but we feel that if people can't take a joke, then they are the very people we are writing about in the first place.

Felix Von Havoc is one such person. Apparently, "Mr. Von Havoc" took great offense to our final song of the evening, entitled "I Have X's On My Hands 'Cause I'm A Faggot." We were not quite sure what he found so offensive because, instead of talking to us about why we would write such a song, He chose to act like a 4 year old and throw a folding chair at our lead vocalist, causing a bit of a melee in front of the stage. So let me take a moment to ponder some of the possibilities here. Was it our use of the word faggot? I can understand a person being offended by this, but in no way do we mean this as a derogitory term for homosexuals. We use this because most of the meathead jock type assholes in our scene view this as the ultimate insult, and what better way to get under their skin? Or was it our lampooning of the straight edge scene itself? Our problem is with the violent, tough guy sXe scene, of which Mr. Von Havoc is obviously a part. We don't care if people choose to not drink or smoke weed, or whatever. We have several friends who chose that lifestyle, some who were at that show, and were they throwing things? No, they were laughing at a satire of the scene that was being played out on the stage before them. This whole incident is just a bitter reminder of why myself, and so many others, have given up on the whole crust punk scene. Nobody cares about changing the world, they just want to fight with people they disagree with. I always thought our enemies were the government, the police, the church, and corporations, not some dude in a metal band making a joke onstage.

In conclusion I'd like to speak for a very large number of people in saying that Felix Von Havoc is no longer welcome here in Phoenix. We have enough dumb jock straight edgers of our own, we don't need to be importing them from Minneapolis as well. And to 3/4 of Skitsystem, thanks for understanding and being cool about things. If you were insulted, please feel free to drop me a line, and we can talk about it. As for the other guy, there's nothing wrong with being a "stupid metal kid," just like there's nothing wrong with being a punk, a crusty, a goth, a stoner, or a hardcore kid. And if I did have a problem with any of those kids, I like to think that I am intelligent enough to express my feelings in a constructive manner, rather than throwing random punches at kids trying to stop a fight from occurring. As far as your comment to me that my band is "ridiclous," thanks, maybe you got it after all.

—Tim "The Colonel" Callaway
E. T. T. S.
kraglar666@hotmail.com
P.S. Thanks to all the kids who intervened and kept this incident from escalating into a brawl, rather than stooping to one asshole's idiotic level of violence.

Dear *MRR*—
I am 17 year-old punk from a small town out side of Cincinnati Ohio the poorest area in all of Ohio I think. I was sitting in class as a debate went on about the draft. Looks like I am gonna get to go over seas and die for Bush. I saw something about the draft a few months back in *MRR* and I didn't think anything of it. What the fuck can I do, I can't vote I am not of age and by the time I am I will be fighting in a war that no one wants. My dad love Bush he listens to the radio (rush limball...hey I tried my best on spelling it) and is like, "Yeah he is right those damn democrats!!!" My dad was drafted but got out because of his eyes and he can say go Bush and send his own son to war. Well there is no real point to my letter, it's just so I can bitch.
—Nathaniel Hamiton
P.S. Anyone in Ohio with any news about bands, shows, distro I dont care send them to rockin_pnumonia@yahoo.com we are trying to put together a scene report.

Anyone who cares—
This letter is in response to the U.K. scene report in issue# 256. First things first: I would have to say one of the reasons for poor attendance and empty gigs (in London at least) is the mentality of the drunk punks. Don't get me wrong, I like hitting the pub as much as the next guy, but alot of these people are spending what little money they have on alcohol so they can drink outside of the venue instead of going in and seeing the show. For many here it seems that buying that ever precious bottle of white lightning is more important than seeing and supporting the local bands in the scene. This of course is not true in all cases, if its a big touring band from the states or something people come out in droves, but the smaller bands are continually being passed over. In this respect, I feel the bands mentioned in the UK scene report are barely scratching the surface, and they seem to be quite obvious being a Londoner who is at every show I can make it to. A few of the bands mentioned are on household name records, which is pretty much a label for kids into ska punk ala 1997 and the uber trendy merch stand sloganeering of bands like LEFTOVER CRACK, whose new album is released in the uk by HHN (it seems like every teenage girl around here fell out of a high street fashion shop and into a low cut sewn up to make it tighter leftover crack shoot the kids at school t shirt). HHN also seems to change its style alot with what's going on, i.e. a few years back when hardcore was in vogue they put out bands in that particular genre, now, and thank fuck for this, ska-punk is on its way out-not completely gone-but getting there-and now they are releasing more crusty/street stuff, though I must say the guys that run household name have a great record shop called All Ages Records on Pratt street between Mornington Crescent and Camden Town tube stations. Its pretty much London's only punk-HxC record shop, they are really cool guys who can get in just about anything you want at a very reasonable rate. Check it out when in the city of smoke. 17 STITCHES are done for, at least in the lineup they have been running with for the past few years. Regretfully they did not play at Wasted Festival and have no intention of playing CBGB's. Leo (the singer from 17 STITCHES) has a new band together called KRYSTAL KNOX, so if you were a fan of his last effort you'll be hard pressed not to enjoy his new endeavor. As for the rest of the band, I believe they are still playing gigs but the band has entered the realm of beatdown tough guy hardcore. Other bands to check out in this city include TRENCHER. Trencher is a 3 piece self-professed "casio grind" band who definitely play some spazzed out music. The band consists of a way distorted bass, speed freak drummer, and a casio keyboard, yeah, the kind you got for Christmas in 1983. Really good band. They have a split 5" with KINETIC CRASH CORPORATION out on super hi fi records, as well as a full length called "when dracula thinks....look at me" out on no more than 6 different labels. NARCOSIS are another band in the grind genre who never seem to disappoint. Walls of noise causing aural devastation, fucking awesome. FIG 4.0 were a great band, though at time of writing this they have decided to call it quits. They were a very energetic band with literate lyrics and a passion unsurpassed who sounded like a mix between SPAZZ and KID DYNAMITE. (I know how that comparison sounds, but they actually pulled it off). MOLOTOV COCKS are another great listen. As to what they sound like, I couldn't quite describe, but I heard people use "they sound like what would happen if the bad

guys from he-man started a band." Take that for what its worth. RAM RAID THE OFFIE are another rather amusing band, incorporating their love of alcohol with a disdain for the conventions of modern society, they come across sounding like a good old barroom singalong band with a knack for a good time, and they are really nice guys to boot. There are far too many bands to mention here, so I'll leave it at that. I also just want to say something regarding the Camden Town crusties who sit on the bridge all day, harassing passers by and stealing kids beer/fags. These guys whore themselves to tourists as being the quintessential London punk rocker, standing around with studded jacket glistening in the sunlight, Mohican finely done and standing tall in the breeze, and charge people £1 to take a photo of them. They more or less invite the world to join in on the stereotype of the drunk homeless London punk, two fingers in the air, sneering and offensive. I don't know, I just find it hard to believe any of these guys are even into music, fact being that I rarely see them inside a gig. Oh well, enough bitching from me. No hard feelings to anyone I may have offended in this letter, its just one guys opinion. There is alot more to be said about this London scene, so I would encourage anyone who has anything to say about it write more letters and help to put together some better scene reports. This is a great city with alot of good shit going on. Thanks.
—Carter "The Devil Is Alive In Southgate" Jameson
krimethinc4@hotmail.com

Hey *MRR*,

I was just writing in to say thanks for reviewing my band's CD and for keeping a great mag going. Only one thing was wrong, our website was misprinted. It's actually malpracticepunx.com with an "x", not a "k." Thanks a lot and thanks for always keeping it real.
Jay Teasley

Hey Mike Thorn—

I get what your saying in your column about "where's the danger? Where's the real rebellion?" and I didn't take it as any insult to whatever efforts I may have, but when can we get past all of this?

I'll be the first to say that in the world of punk rock I'm a wee one, got into it in the 6th grade (I'm 17 now) and live in a city (Montgomery, Alabama) where there's no real music scene, and all ages scene to say the least (though I'm trying to change that!). Anywho, wasn't the explosion of punk rock in part because of EMI (the first Sex Pistols single after being on that show) with the Sex Pistols and what not? I mean, I know that this wasn't the start of punk, but from what I remember it gave a great boost into it. I'm not trying to dive into history, and I'm not saying that it's right, but though its not perfect, ideal, and very much contaminated I still think we've come a long way. You said yourself 30 years, and look at how much has changed? I mean, theres still bullshit, but what aspect of our life doesn't have bullshit? what part doesn't say something about someone in our mind that's racist or puts someone down?

I honestly don't know how you see things, I can't say that I have the most experience in the punk rock world, so maybe that's why I'm so optimistic, but how can something that has grown as much as it has *not* be corrupt? No one's perfect alone, and in a large network, tribe, group, cooperative, collective, whatever, then we're *really* fucked.

I know you weren't putting anyone down in your column and I didn't take it as such, I'm just speaking from my personal opinion/disgust of what seems to be people talking about "the good old days" and people constantly talking about how its come to be all about fashion, or drugs, or whatever. I don't know and don't care what its come to, all I know is that I love the music that I do and through the ideas and ground tread by others, its inspired me to do the same. Its easy to say that most people have been inspired or changed in one way or another, but why don't we focus on other stuff then "this group is homophobic and racist" or "its just not what it used to be"?

Whenever I put on shows, I know the kids have a better time either talking to the band or me talking to the kids. Not to say we shouldn't be weary if oppressive elements come in, and to keep ourselves accountable as far as DIY goes, but why focus on the past when we have the chance to create/destroy the future? Maybe its the time I got into punk rock, I don't know, I just don't agree with everyone talking about "how it was" and "the problems that still exist". We know we have problems, now lets get onto the solution!

I can complain about it being a bitch to put on shows, how the kids here are lame, blah blah blah, but I must say the most rewarding aspect of doing shows and to be a punk rocker is to get to talk to other people and just be a friend. Aside from me there are only a few other punks here so needless to say its an oddity, but when I call someone out when they say the word "fag" or be nice and get a "I'm surprised! I thought you'd be an asshole!" remark, I see something bright coming about. We still need to always hold true to the DIY ethic and to keep out shit that puts others down, but we also just need to let loose and do what we can.

I know you've probably heard this before, and I know that at 2:16 in the morning this probably isn't the best time to write something, but it has been an on going thing that just hasn't died down yet. I don't mean anything I've said as an insult, I enjoy the zine as well as your column, but I just wanted to point that out.

By the way, I have an idea for a column about trying to create a scene in a city like the one that I live in, and maybe do it from the perspective of someone whose my age. As I've said, I've done shows here with different bands (Damage Deposit, Kakistocracy, Kylesa, and some others to name a few), but maybe use it as just a reference for doing shows and other useful info. Anywho, just an idea. Have a good one,
—Jamie
diy_jamiesellers@yahoo.com

Jamie,
You know I'd like to get beyond constantly asking those questions as to where the real danger and rebellion lies, but for some reason I'm constantly having those thoughts running through my head. I think more than anything I see punk having become more of a sub-culture and less of a counterculture—especially one that actively reacts and lashes back at the dominate culture. It frustrates me because the näive idealist side of me sees the potential for it to be much more than a self-referential insular thing. I'm quite aware of the amazing, inspiring people that exist today, and I'm never really one to look to the past in rose colored glasses as some sort of punk rock utopia and I know dumb fucks have always existed but I don't know man—like I said, sometimes it feels like the moments of inspiration are fewer and farther between—but then something will hit me and I'm smacked right out of my chair. Be it an incredible show, record, piece of writing, action or art—the potential of the punk scene and what it can do constantly blows me away. More than anything I don't think we should ever be satisfied, should always pushing forward, pushing boundaries and challenging everything. What we've built as an alternative to all the shit they serve is great, but don't just settle with that. Thanks for writing.
—Mike Thorn

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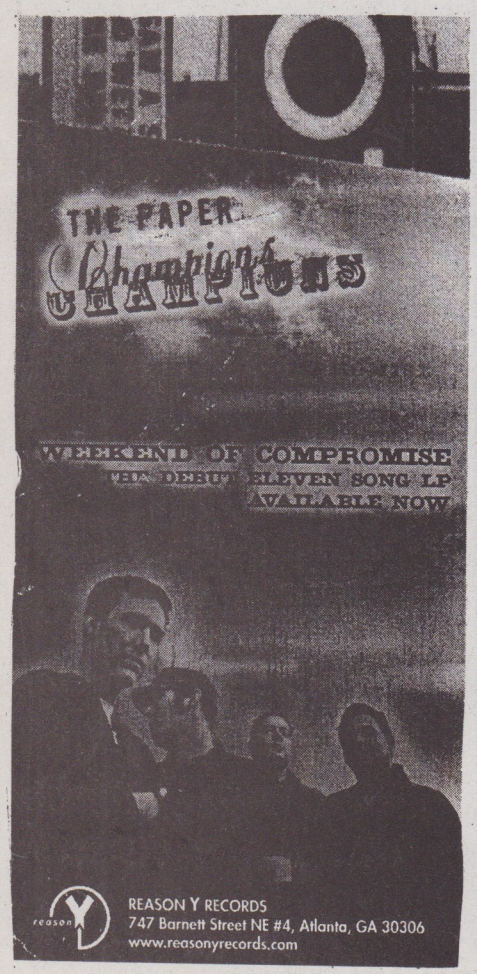

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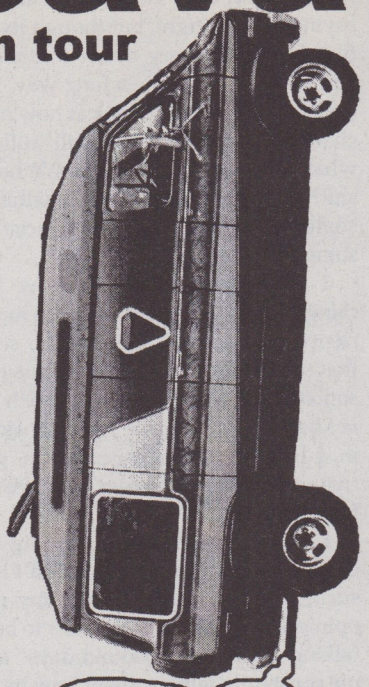

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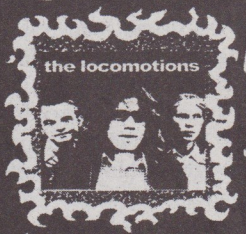

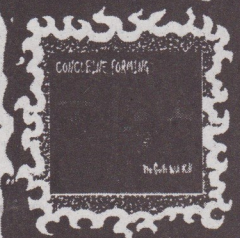

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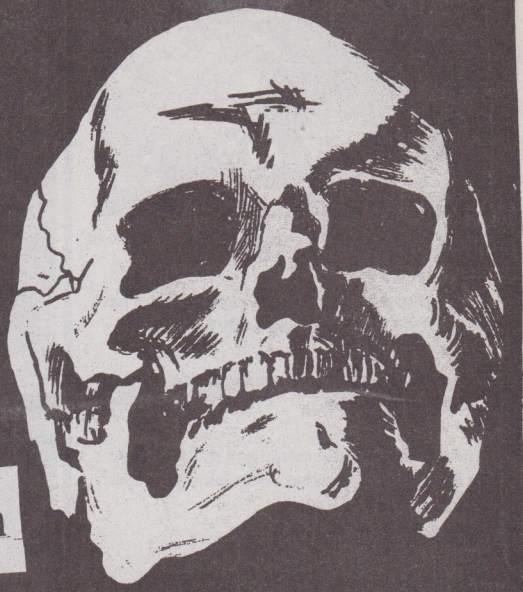

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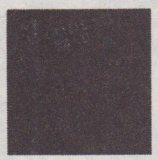
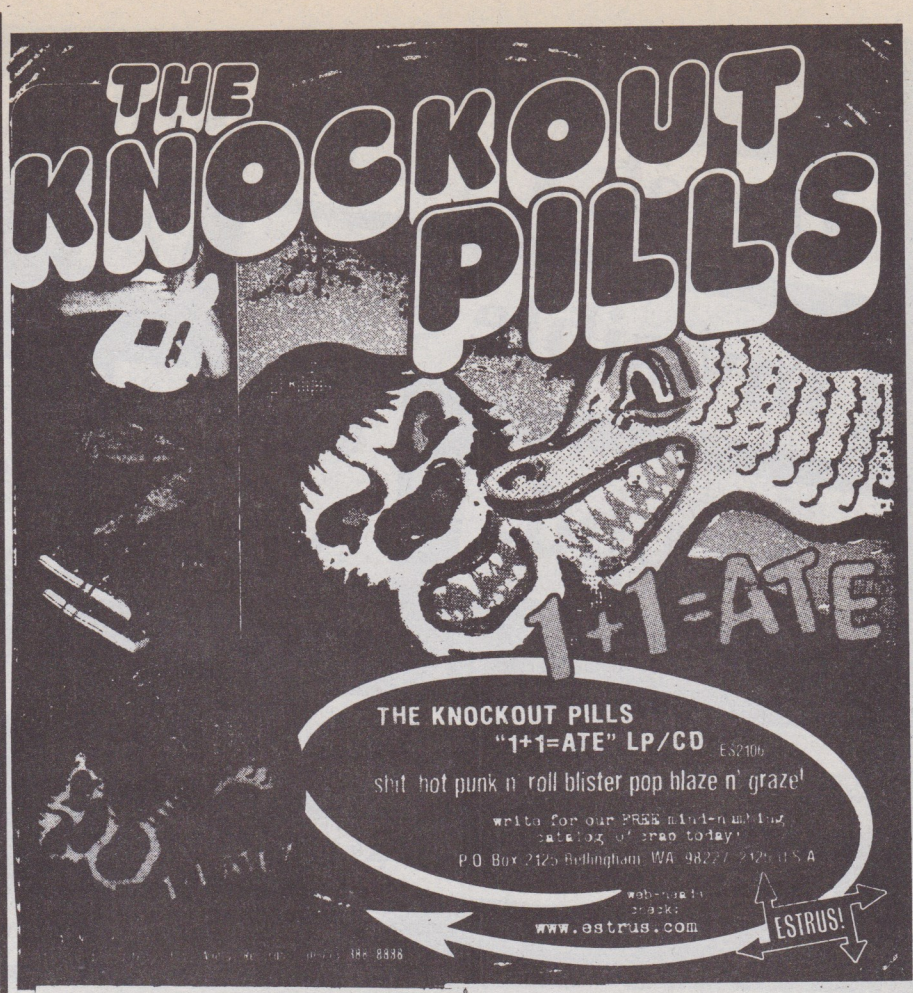


"Always something there to destroy me"

"The punk girl next door"



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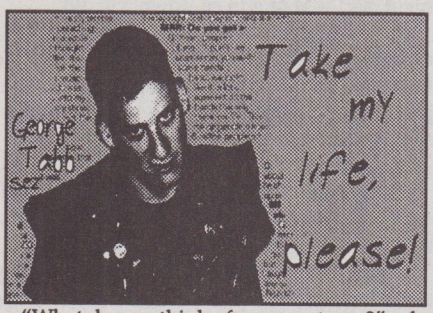


"What do you think of my new town?" asks my pal, Nicky, as he and I futz around with his new Mac toy, "Garage Band." We are working on a version of Furious George's "I Am The King," only totally recorded on a Mac with a keyboard only. The sounds we are getting are amazing.

"It's pretty rad," I tell the not-quite-twelve-year old, as I stay at his house on our current book tour.

I don't wanna tell him what I really think.

"Come on, George," says Nicky, who really can read between the lines, "what do you think?"

I tell him I've been to Baltimore before.

And it wasn't all it was cracked up to be.

Or maybe it was.

"Tell me," says the 11 and 11/12th's year old.

So I do.

Poor kid.

*

"What's the name of the club, again?" asked Michael, the drummer for Furious George, as we got off the Russell exit on 395 North.

"It's The Brass Monkey," said Adam, the guy we hired to drive us on tour because he had a bright yellow van.

"Kinda fitting," said Evan, from the front seat, with his mouth full of pepperoni Combos. I had tried one earlier, and they were sort of tasty.

"How's that?" I asked, from the back of the van, on top of the futon, and half asleep.

"Brass Monkey, Furious George..." explained Evan. "You know. Primates!"

But I didn't get it. I'd slept the night before in a dorm at Penn State, and my mind was still wandering the floors of the girl's section. I had woken up to piss at around five in the morning, and ran into a bunch of little sorority girls in the hall. I was wearing red sweatpants with a Snoopy logo on them, and a Green Day t-shirt. They were wearing hardly anything.

"You don't live here," said one of the little blue-eyed, blonde-haired, big-breasted little things.

"I'm in a band," I said, rubbing the sleep from my eyes.

"What band?" one of them asked, "Green Day?"

At least it was obvious that she could read.

"Yeah," I said as I started again toward the bathroom. My feet were cold from the stone floors, and I kinda had an erection that I hoped the girls didn't notice.

"You must be Billy Joe! With your blonde hair and all!" one of the girls exclaimed.

I told her that she was right, that it was great meeting her, and that I really had to take a leak.

"Billy, why are you staying in a dorm?" asked one of the blonde bunch.

"Hotels are full. Homecoming weekend. We have friends here."

"Wow," said another, "Billy Joe in our dorm! Will you come visit us in our room? Its number 302. Just down the hall. Please?"

I noticed her looking at my erection.

I told her I would.

The girls then left, giggling and hugging each other with excitement.

I went into the "boy's" room, entered a stall, and started to piss. Someone came into the stall next to me. I heard him throw up the toilet seat, and then cough. The next thing I knew my bare feet were covered in vomit.

After washing off, I really wasn't in the mood to visit the blondes.

"We go to Eastern, then to Bond. It's on the left," said Evan.

Adam nodded his head and kept on driving.

I sat up and looked out the window. There were lots of trees, and a nice skyline in the distance.

"Do you have a snow globe from here?" I asked Michael, our drummer, who collects such things. He had bought one in Pennsylvania. It had a deer in it. Michael knocked over the animal so it was on its back with all four legs in the air, like the hundred or so deer we'd seen along the highway.

"Not yet," he said, "but I'll find one."

We continued to drive, and I noticed that the neighborhood we were in started to get bad, real quick. Just like the East Village, or uptown. Suddenly all the take-out places and convenience stores had bullet proof glass in front of the cashiers.

"I hope we aren't playing around here," I said.

"There's the club," said Evan, pointing to a sign that read "Brass Monkey."

Doh.

*

Five hours later, we returned to the club. The owner guy, who must have been in his late sixties or early seventies, didn't even know who we were when we first entered the place. We told him that we were Furious George.

"Curious George?" he asked.

"Furious George, from New York City," I said.

"Don't know no Curious George from New York. Who booked you?"

I told him that some guy named Karl did. He didn't know who Karl was either. Then the phone rang. He answered it.

"Hello, Brass Monkey," he said.

Silence.

"Oh yeah, Curious George, they're playing here tonight, absolutely! Great band they are! From New York!"

After he got off the phone, he told us that we'd probably go on late, around one in the morning. And that we must have been famous since someone called to ask if we were playing.

Whatever.

As we loaded out our equipment, we noticed a large sign in front of the club that wasn't there earlier. Earlier, there was a small sign that read "Numb Nuts, Frankenstein Drag Queens From Planet X," and some other band. Now it read, in huge letters, "Cuirous George". They even spelled the wrong name wrong.

"Who are you guys?" asked the bouncer guy at the door as I rolled up my Marshall in its new road case I got from my pal, Mickey.

"Furious George," I replied.

"Ain't got no Furious George playing here tonight," was his reply, "but we do have a Curious George!"

"Same thing," yelled some girl from behind me.

I turned around and looked at her. Long brown hair, beautiful eyes, real fake leather pants, and fuck-me boots. She was hot.

"Hi George," she said to me.

"Umm," I stammered, "Ummm, hi!"

"Don't you know who I am?" she asked. I thought she might be this girl, Lucianne, who I'd been writing to on the internet, but I was probably wrong. No girl that good looking was going to waste her time on the internet. Especially writing to me.

"Um, I dunno," I said.

"Lucianne!" she replied.

I almost fainted.

"It's great to finally meet you," I said. "You don't look anything like your font!"

She giggled.

Suddenly I looked forward to playing shithole we were in.

Lucianne and I talked, and she introduced me to her roommate Jamie and some of her friends. All the while my band continued to unload our gear.

Finally, when they were done, I instructed them to move everything into the club. The first band had finished playing, and it was a perfect time to do so. They bitched at me, and

moved the stuff.

Once inside, we all got some drinks and settled in. It was a bit of trouble getting Lucianne and Jamie in, since they were under 21, but we convinced the owner that they were our back-up singers. He kinda didn't go for it, but we told him they would sort of undress a bit, and would be a great draw for all the horny guys walking by. He looked at them then agreed. As long as they wouldn't drink. And they didn't. Too much.

The first band that played was The Frankenstein Drag Queens From Planet 13. The sign outside said "X", because no one at the club remembered what the planet was.

Thirteen.

Duh.

The next band up was some typical hard-core-metal act. Most of the guys in the band wore shorts, and the singer had long, straight, black hair. And looked very German.

"Ya know," I said to Lucianne, between blasts of noise, "if he were to have a small mustache, he'd look just like Hitler!"

She nodded her head, then told Jamie, who told Evan, who told Michael, who told The Drag Queens, who eventually told some friend of the bands.

We were lucky that their friends really liked Hitler.

Next up was Karl's band. The guy who booked us. A big skinhead guy I'd also met on the internet. A few months earlier he'd posted that he and "the DC crew" were gonna kick my ass. Now he wanted to play with us. Turns out he's a nice guy. Go figure. Anyway, his band started to play, and I went outside with Lucianne.

"So, what do ya do down here in 'Homicide, Life On The Streets' town?" I asked her.

She told me that she was going to John Hopkins University, and studying astronomy.

"Like they teach you about horoscopes," I said to her, totally serious.

"They teach us about the stars, the planets. That stuff. My father builds rockets," she said.

Lucianne's father was a real rocket scientist. Wow. I didn't think those existed.

She went on to tell me that she was already working for a large company, Hubble, and was very well respected. And she was eighteen. And had on fake leather pants. Pretty eyes. And fuck-me boots. This girl could have been getting drunk with a Kennedy. Why she was even talking to me, I'll never know.

Finally, The Numb Nuts quit playing and it was our turn. Karl asked me while I was loading my amp on stage what I thought of the band.

"Great," I lied. I missed most of their set.

"Cool," he said back, "have a great gig."

And we did. Sort of. I mean, for Baltimore.

"Hey, we're Curious George," I said into the microphone, "and it's great to be here in Washington DC!"

We then played our first three songs to plenty of cursing and spitting.

After the third song, Evan and I took off our leather jackets. Like usual. The audience was yelling at us.

"Fuck you you pussies," yelled some big guy from the back.

"Hey," I said, "That's our line!"

"Shut up pussy," the guy yelled back, "You fucking suck dick you asshole, fuck you!"

I looked at Lucianne, Jamie, and The Drag Queens. They looked sort of worried.

"Fuck you," I said to the big guy, "And where the hell is Richard Beltzer, I want fucking Richard Beltzer! And John Waters! Where's he? I want fucking John Waters!"

We then played a couple more songs. And as we did, the audience held up their middle fingers and yelled louder at us. Then it was time for bottles to start flying.

"What?" I said between songs to the crowd, "Ya don't like us?"

I took a long look at the crowd. Besides our two friends that were girls, the rest of the place was full of jocks, rednecks, and scary skinheads.

"You guys suck!" said some jock.

"So do you," was my answer. I then counted off the next song.

"You guys are gay homosexuals," a large redneck yelled before we could start our next song.

My hands dropped to my sides, and I just stared at Evan and Michael. They stared back at me.

"Gay Homosexuals?" I said, "And that's supposed to be clever?"

"Fuck you," was his response. His friends laughed.

"I guess I should expect terms like 'gay homosexuals' from a town that names its baseball team after a cookie that's chocolate on the outside, and creamy on the inside," I said.

"It's 'Orioles,' cocksucker," someone yelled.

"Cocksucker? None of you have cocks big enough to suck. I want a meal, not a snack!"

More bottles flew, and lots of fuck yous.

"This one is for all you he-men out there," I said.

We then played "Macho Man" by the Village People, with Jamie and Lucianne doing back-ups. They were cute on the "Hey-hey - hey-hey-hey-hey!" part.

After we finished the song, the crowd was ready to kill us. We were called fags, homos, pussies, and even sissies.

"Sissies?" I said, "that coming from people who live in a state called *mary*-land?"

"Fuck you," said the large redneck again, "you guys are just a bunch of fucking nigger lovers!".

The place got silent. You could hear the faucet in the restroom drip.

"Nigger lovers?" I said, really shocked.

"We expected that in the south, like Florida, but here?" said Evan into the mic.

I looked at Michael. For once, he wasn't smiling.

"Yeah, you fucking nigger lovers. I'll fuck you in the ass so hard I'll rip you apart," yelled the big guy.

"I know what this is," I said, "this is Deliverance. Right here in Baltimore. Squeal like a pig. This city sucks dog shit. You are all a bunch of hick dumbasses. Fuck you."

The place was dead silent. Then Karl, the big tough skinhead who booked us walked up on stage and whispered in my ear.

"Dude," he started, "this is a tough place, I wouldn't say stuff like that here. They'll kill you. You must have huge balls!"

I thanked Karl for his concern and compliment, and told him to sit down. He did.

"We are gonna finish our set, and we don't wanna hear anymore racist or homophobic bullshit," I said. When I thought about what just came out of my mouth, I was in shock. Me, saying that?

Imagine.

"Fuck you," yelled a couple of huge rednecks in the back, "go back to New York and fuck some niggers for crack, you gay fags!"

I then told them that we were going to play the rest of the set, and then I'd fuck them in the ass, which is what they really wanted, anyway.

We played "Freebird", then finished the set to catcalls, boos, and broken bottles.

As we packed up our equipment, I looked around for the huge rednecks. I figured if I was gonna die, I wanted to see it coming. But I couldn't find them. They must have left.

"Who called me fat ass?" said one of the large rednecks. He was outside the club, yelling at the door guy.

"I dunno," said the door guy, quietly.

"I wanna know who called me fat ass? My ass is not fat. I am not a fat ass. I'm just big. I'm gonna kill the nigger faggot who called me fat ass!" yelled the huge guy.

I walked up to the door and looked at Fat Ass. In the light. He was wearing a cap with the John Deere logo on it, a flannel shirt, jeans, and boots. And he was very large.

"What's up?" said Fat Ass to me, "that was fun. Do you know who called me fat ass?"

I told him I had no idea, then slinked away.

Later, we packed up the van, and said goodbye to our new friends Lucianne, Jamie, and The Drag Queens. Karl, who told me it was a good thing we weren't dead, paid us our whopping $31 dollars for the night.

"So George," said Lucianne, as she hugged me good-bye, "I'm really sorry about the show, but please don't hold it against Baltimore. Okay?"

"Okay," I said, and kissed her on the cheek.

As we took off in Adam's bright yellow van, I knew I'd miss Lucianne, Jamie, Karl, and The Drag Queens. I also knew I'd miss Fat Ass, the nazis, and all their friends. Baltimore. A good crowd like that is rare to find these days.

Take My Life, Please.

Endnotes:

1. I later found out "Fat Ass" was a cop. Nice town.
2. I got Martin Crisis's cool book, *Compression*, which was out on Three Days Dead, but I guess will be reprinted elsewhere. Anyway, if you find it, it's a fun and good read. And Martin rules! Cheers, mate!
3. Got more cool CDs this month, but nothing as good as the stuff on "Whoa Oh" Records. So I ain't even gonna mention them.
4. A lot of you are finding me on myspace.com.

It's fuckin' great. If you haven't already, please do find me. I'm at: http://profile.myspace.com/users/285349.

5. My first book, *Playing Right Field: A Jew Grows In Greenwich* is now out on Soft Skull books. Look for it in the baseball section of Borders and the Jewish section of Barnes & Noble.

6. Buy the Gilman Street book put out by *MRR*, now. Know your roots.

7. www.georgetabb.com

First of all, loves, this column is being written in a blistering storm, in the town of Asheville, with streets flooded by some 36 hours of rainfall, on a warm August night in my friend Katie Greer's house, but she is away selling leather at a biker convention. So Katie Greer, brassieres off to you, and thanks for the room.

I am drinking a double Dickel with cola, in a pink room with limited lighting, and everyone is at the other end of the house ripping up the linoleum floor to liberate the hardwood that lurks underneath. They are playing every ADD/DC record in quick succession, singing along and drinking bottles of beer we bought at a grocery store before it was shut down from the flood. Everyone is sharing updates on the storm, the French Broad River has been flooded with rainfall and red-stained diesel oil, and the smell when we ran down there early this afternoon, after drinking black coffee and eating two helpings of biscuits and gravy, was like huffing fresh gas, like asphyxiating from the precious substance that has forced so many young kids from this very area to go all the way across the world to kill strangers. That vile scent made everyone wonder if there was any reason to want this gasoline shit at all. It would have been a good time for some precocious anarchists to educate the masses on the beauty of biodiesel.

Second off, a toast. We all had our own ways of dealing with the departure of Ronald Reagan, from a hollow sense of loss on the part of the morons who liked his charisma to a quick celebration from those of us who grew up under the grey cloud of inevitable apocalypse that he fed us as little children. But, I ask you, will all the punx join me in a toast to the recent departure of another of our universal enemies, Richard G. Butler, the original founder of that most illogical and hated of institutions, the goddamned aryan nation. This man polluted our scene with racist skinheads, threatened the safety and the piece of mind of so many good people, and just generally made a career of ignorance and hatred. So, Mr. Butler, no, *Dick*, fuck you. You are dead in a ditch six feet under and I am enjoying some fine sippin' whiskey. There *is* a little kernel of justice in this world.

My friend Billie Joe, that most wild of all the "wildasses" in Chattanooga, Tennessee, had a request for me on Sunday night, the night this thing we call a column was actually due. We were each ten beers into a twelve-pack and I was late, unsure where I was gonna find a computer in a town where some of my friends' toilets don't flush and I was being advised to "just ignore the shit." It was pretty obvious no computer was to be found. It seemed the most pious thing to do to at least *talk* about it, you know, to make myself look better. I was like, "Man, this thing's gonna be late." Billy Joe said to me, "Kat, man, will you call your column *Dancing with Beers in My Eyes* just once, you know, for me, man?" and he laughed for a minute at his own dumb joke and then I think he wandered outside to make Shane shotgun yet another beer for his birthday, in the spirit of dancing with beers for eyes. Frankly, Billie Joe has probably never even read this column, but if he's in some random shitter somewhere in the South, hey, buddy, I ain't gonna make Mike change the masthead, but this one is *Dancing with Beers in My Eyes*, most certainly, and fucking cheers to all you crazy kids and your brilliant literature collections and empty twelve-packs.

See, me and Shane, we left California near the end of August to burn a little gas for Georgie Bush. My job was over that day, so we drove down south and then through Arizona, saw some family on the way (love you, Nana!) and then just gunned it like hell through Texas. I believe that state cost us 864 miles, give or take a couple, and a few wasted hours spent looking for Waffle House and whiskey for the night. We hit Texas on a Sunday, so no hard liquor, and we didn't find a Waffle House until Houston, that sprawling metropolis on the far eastern half of the state. So all our diversions yielded little results; however, on one of our I-10 whiskey excursions, we did see some handsome elderly Texan men outside an art gallery with hand-painted signs ten miles north of the Mexican border, smoking and enjoying a cup of what I am sure was black coffee. One of the signs, half a block long and fashioned in imperfect block script, read, "When Clinton lied, no one died." This was not so far from Crawford, in the heart of what our false president would like us to believe is Bush country. So don't believe everything you've been assigned to read about rural Amerika.

After Texas, we watched dawn break in a rest stop on the Louisiana bayou right off the border, and Shane went to piss and was nearly assaulted by water snakes. Right before dawn, we slept in the camper of my black pickup until the mosquitoes had eaten too much of me and there was no moisture left in my flesh from all the humid nauseous sweat, and I got up to put in my contacts and wash my face. The place was monitored by the po po, who were there to keep an eye on the prisoners who were being bussed in to clean the johns. As I was washing out my armpits in the sink, two older ladies, employed by the rest stop, were debating whether or not they believed that the prisoners were, in fact, using bleach when they cleaned. "No, I do not believe so," one of the women told the other, and I put in my eyes and was finally able to take in my surroundings. The absolute weirdness of it all struck me, and I got in the front of the car and kept driving, driving, first through New Orleans so Shane could show me around real fast the New Orleans he'd visited as a child, and then to glorious Pensacola, Florida, where one of my good friends lives as she waits for her husband's return from Baghdad. Shane's mom and stepdad also lived there, and so we hung out in the reality of our histories for a while, watched the Jack Palance Band and ADD/DC play at the new Sluggo's, drank dollar PBRs and held everyone we loved who was so close for so short a time, in a foggy, sweat-drenched room, in the punk rock south, where everyone calls their elders "man" and there is always enough food for everyone.

More next month. I guess you fuckers can email me cuz you never write real letters anymore: katwroteyouback@yahoo.com.

I'm *still* playing catch-up! Before we run through the regular new stuff, it's time to plow through another batch of Japanese punk goodies. It seems only appropriate to begin with Needle Records, a label that has been releasing some of the best Japanese punk records in recent memory. Hopefully you were able to track down Needle's ZYMOTICS and SNEEZE singles from last year. Thanks to Ryan Wells and Steve Strange, I learned that the rest of Needle's stuff was just as fantastic.

Needle marks their first foray into the full-length album arena with the highly anticipated debut from The YOUNG ONES! Japanese punk devotees will recognize them from Mangrove's *Chloroform* compilation and, if you're lucky, their one single on Pogo '77. The YOUNG ONES have been around for over 10 years, being one of the last bands from "the boom" still going, but they didn't release an album until 2003. Apparently they spent all of their time ensuring that the album would be *totally fucking awesome*, as their s/t debut (CD-only) leaves my head spinning after every listen. This is fast, hooky and LOUD Japanese punk, pure and simple. Any fan of the early REGISTRATORS or the GIMMIES would flat-out shit their pants over this puppy.

The debut 45 by THE KNOCKS, "Our Place" b/w "What's Better?" is clearly influenced by UK mod like THE JAM and JOLT,

though they still wear their '77 punk badges proudly. I'm not as hot on this single as I am on Needle's other stuff, but it still kicks ass over 90% of the singles being released today.

By all accounts, KEEN MONKEY WORK appears to be the new punk hope for Japan. Their unapologetic love for all things *Killed By Death* really comes through on all their recordings (and in the poses they strike in pictures), providing a welcome change of pace from the mod and power-pop sounds we're used to hearing outta Japan lately. First heard on the great Tinstar Records compilation *Ride The Rockin' Rocket*, KMW caught the attention of Needle, who released their fantastic debut single, the *Maniac And Violence* 7" in 2002. Thus far, their finest outing is definitely their album (CD only) on Waveform, *Slow Pork*, which was produced by Hiroshi of The REGISTRATORS. KMW is set to appear on Needle's upcoming compilation (!), which will be prominently featured in this column upon its release.

The FIRESTARTER camp has returned with a new CDEP/7"EP. The catch is that the boys are backing up Shoji of Japan's long-running power-pop/mod combo THE BADGE. *Ready Steady Go!*, released on MMR, is for Fink/Fifi fanatics only.

Target Earth has released a slew of great records in the post-boom period. After introducing us to FIRESTARTER, THE TWEEZERS and RADIO SHANGHAI, they've got two new singles set to take over. TRIO checks in first with their debut 45, "Don' Forget" b/w "Fight". More anthem-prone (I'm eerily reminded of LEATHERFACE or SNUFF) than most of the stuff mentioned above, it's still snotty enough to be lumped in with past greats. Next is a new 45 by THE PLAYMATES who play garage/punk/power-pop (with previous releases K.O.G.A.) called "I Need You Tonight" b/w "Time For Your Tears".

Yanks should remember INTIMATE FAGS from their releases on Rip Off. While those two records are moderately impressive, their lesser-known singles on Freaked Out Frequencies and Suburban Disturbance are what really deliver the goods. It's been a few years since the release of those singles, but they are back under the abbreviated name I.F. Orchard has released a 45, "Everyday" b/w "Neighbor Girl", that veers closer to power-pop than any of their other releases.

I dropped the ball by failing to mention TEENAGE CONFIDENTIAL sooner. Hopefully you caught Bobby Manic's gushing review of their *Rock'N'Roll Kiss* LP, released earlier this year by Screaming Apple. While I don't think they take FIRESTARTER's crown as the reigning champions of Japanese power-pop, they certainly come close. Their sound is generally more aggressive than FIRESTARTER, but not punk enough to contend with the Needle acts. Those of you looking for some nice middle ground should seek this out. Lucky for you, it should be pretty easy to find. Great stuff!

Like new wave with trashcan production? Me neither. Steer clear of the debut single by NEONS, the *London Dreaming* 7"EP on Revel Yell Music. They've made the keys and spazzy inflections of the far-superior RADIO SHANGHAI annoying as all get-out, sounding like some "We Are The 80s" disco drones. Wave kids might get a kick (sadly), but this was the biggest letdown of the batch.

If what you are looking for is ultra-clean wave-influenced power-pop, look no further than Reactor Records' *The Soundtrack For Us* CDEP, the debut release from BOYCE. The fact that these guys feature a former member of The TWEEZERS ought to be enough to let you know that this is power-pop done right! It might be a tad too clean for me, but the tunes are fabulous. I even look past the bullshit CDEP format. It's that good!

Finally, FRANTIC STUFFS are back with another single! Their debut was fantastic and they've certainly topped it with the *Carp Kidz!* 7"EP, released on MFFM Records. Again, they'll be featured on the upcoming Needle Records compilation, so you'll be hearing more about these guys in this column. Potential buyers: scour the Internet for Japanese distros. These records can be ordered for less than you think...and they're worth every penny! So many "flat-tire bands", so little time...

We now return to our regularly scheduled programming with a top-notch heap of reissues and bootlegs from punk's past. We start with what has to be my most anticipated reissue of the year: Swami Records' re-introduction of CRIME to the worldwide punk public, *San Francisco's STILL Doomed*. One of my all-time favorite bands handsomely reissued! Finally! Buying a Crime record for under $20! Fuck off, eBay! I can't believe it took this long. We live in a world where MISFITS singles get bootlegged on a seasonal basis but it takes 10 years for a legit Crime reissue. Things are looking up. I was *this* close to killing myself, but Swami saved me! Rejoice! Sneer! Crime is here! My lemon is safe and sound, thank you very much! Essential!

S-S Records has done everyone a great service by releasing *Runnin' Ape-Like From The Backwards Superman*, a singles/rarities compilation of the long-gone material by MONOSHOCK. The period and place this CD-only release focuses on (Bay Area 1989-1995) has always been of special interest to me. I was able to hear bands like MONOSHOCK and ICKY BOYFRIENDS by tuning into college radio, but due to my age and suburban Easy Bay location, never had the opportunity to see any of them live (or score many of their records). The music on this CD is all over the place, flinging your mind and body across the room in a psycho psyche-*punk* whirlwind. Listening to this, I can almost see myself at 15-years-old, smoking in my bedroom while this blasts out of my shitty stereo. This is truly fantastic stuff. Do. Not. Miss.

Alternative Tentacles continues their string of great excavations with *Timeless*, a retrospective package showcasing the outer-space glam tomfoolery of L.A. proto-punks ZOLAR X. My interest in this band was peaked (and I know I'm not alone here) by reading *We Got The Neutron Bomb*, so it's nice to finally hear the music made by these influential aliens. Typical of AT's recent crop of reissues, the grooves are surrounded by extensive liners and fantastic pictures. A fine (and overdue) historical document, and rockin' to boot!

Hohnie Records has released an LP retrospective of Austria's SCHUND. Noted for their appearance on *Killed By Death #6*, this self-titled album features all of the band's studio material as well as a slew of live tracks. Though it's by no means essential, this is an extremely well done reissue that's sure to please fans of the obscure.

As far as singles, we've got a trio of Southern California heavy hitters. First up is a replica bootleg of RHINO 39's fantastic *Prolixin Stomp* 7"EP. Like the other recent Dangerhouse bootlegs, this single uses the original master tapes and features exact reproductions of the cover art. It's safe to say that this is as close as your gonna get to the real thing, and when it's done this well, why complain? One of the more elusive Dangerhouse singles (or so I've read), so snatch one up quick (and keep an eye out for the colored vinyl version). As mentioned last month, Spontaneous Combustion has reissued the *Blues* 7"EP by THE CHIEFS. They really did this one up right, but with the *Hollywest Crisis* reissue being readily available, this replica single should appeal only to the sickest of the sickos (like me). Finally, Alive Records treats listeners to "'Round and 'Round" b/w "Forming (Version 2)", the remaining two songs from THE GERMS' first recording session! Needless to say, if you are a fan of classic L.A. punk, this is your month.

As we move to the new stuff, I'm sure this month's crop will cause a fair amount of hair-pulling and nail-biting amongst record hounds, as the majority of what will be featured are limited run singles on small (mostly European) labels. As you might suspect, I've got a soft spot in my heart (and wallet) for these sorts of records, and I'm gonna give them the attention they deserve. I can think of no better place to start than with the four new releases from the world's finest singles label, Goodbye Boozy! My top pick of the batch is the debut 45 by GAZELLES, an Ohio band featuring members of GERIATRIX! "Pink Notions" b/w "Plastic Panthers" will be filed right next to THE FEELERS' single as the best midwestern debut of the year. Boozy also brings the return of THE KILL-A-WATTS this month with "New Things" b/w "Addictive". Sadly, this will probably be the band's final single, which is a damn shame considering this is probably the best thing they've ever done. VEE DEE's "Blood Zombie" b/w "Her Eyes" is a fitting companion to their top-notch *Further* LP, featuring one of that's album's choice cuts and a non-LP B-side. Finally, and without an ounce of surprise, is "Charlie's Dirt Road" b/w "Mommy", the 1079th single by SCAT RAG BOOSTERS. If you've got a brain, you've already got the other 1078.

Although my designated position here at MRR is "Garage Columnist", I find myself rarely, if ever, talking about actual garage punk records. Perhaps it has a lot to do with the stig-

ma the whole garage thing has going for it right now, but I think it has more to do with the fact that noteworthy garage punk records are such a rare commodity these days. I only mention that which is worthwhile or noteworthy, and there just hasn't been a lot of either as far as garage is concerned. This month is different. There are quite a few new garage punk singles that immediately grabbed me.

Without question, the keepers of the Budget Rock flame are those Renton trash-mongers, Boom Boom Records. This month, they've released singles by newcomers THE FE FI FO FUMS and longtime faves THE FLYING DUTCHMEN. Both kick total and complete ass. Both look like crap. Both sound like shit. And both are 100% certifiable REAL garage trash. Stagger over to www.boom-boom.net for ordering information. Pick up the debut issue of *Cave-Man Digest* while you're at it and read my lost, then delayed, and finally half-assed interview with THE OKMONIKS.

Speaking of The OKMONIKS, they've just belted out their third self-released single! The *Compact 33* 7"EP features seven(!) tunes, all of 'em hits, or so the sleeve says. As expected, this is their best outing yet, featuring their trademark primo organ-driven garage and hot female vocals. 500 copies only!

One look at the black and white retro-porno sleeve of the debut SPIDER RICO single and I knew what I was in for. Released on Kuriosa Records, the *Mae* 7"EP reminds me an early Rip Off Records single (only with two sides and better sound!). Lotsa guitar buzz here, but the bounce in each tune is coated in trash. Good stuff!

San Francisco's TEENAGE HARLETS return with a new single. This time it's a split with THE JUVINALS. The Harlets crash and burn through five tunes on their side, which is a bit of a let down considering their last record was a 13 song 7". The tunes pick up right where that single left off, but c'mon...it's not exactly like they are reinventing the wheel or anything. The JUVINALS are decidedly less hurried than The HARLETS, offering up some slightly impressive keyboard and fuzz-guitar garage. Dead Girl Records is apparently selling these slabs for two bucks a piece. Show up with $5 bucks and you'll have enough left over to grab a 40oz.

I'm quite behind on dishing HEADACHE CITY, but I've been busy listening to their debut single, the *Knee Jerk Reaction* 7"EP. Released on Shit Sandwich and featuring label CEO Norah on key/synth action, Headache City plays an interesting brand of stompy rock-'n'roll with a dark, wavy feel. I can see fans of THE PONYS *and* WHITE+OUTS getting into this, which ought to give you some indication of how appealing this band is. Can't wait to hear what they do next.

Ben R. Wallers is a complicated, deranged man. If his work in COUNTRY TEASERS hasn't convinced you of this fact, then his solo project, THE REBEL, will. SDZ Records has just released his second single, the *Exciting New Venue For Soccer And Execution Of Women* 7"EP. Musically, it's a little more out-there than the recent TEASERS material (though still obviously the same guy), but if you are a fan of that band's recent work (like me), you will be more than happy to snatch this puppy up.

After a long break, the On/On Switch camp returns! They've teamed up with the highly regarded X-Mist label and forced a Split 7"EP collision course with their labels' top acts. In the X-Mist corner is KURT, a booming band outta Germany. On/On's signature gladiators, POPULAR SHAPES, round out the split, checking in with two tunes that feature their signature dueling guitar flashes and art-punk attack. This single, packaged in an eye-popping hand-screened sleeve, will vanish quickly. Seek soon or cry forever.

Although I always tend to feel a fair amount of anxiety when it comes to talking about hardcore records in this column, I feel it's simply impossible to ignore *What The Fuck?!*, the debut 7"EP by Wisconsin's HOLY SHIT! There's also an easy "regular" *Let's Get Hurt* connection in that they feature the drummer of a personal punk favorite of mine, THE CATHOLIC BOYS. HOLY SHIT! play some of the most fun and wild hardcore I've heard in quite some time. With song titles like "Standing Outside Poser" and "Self Expression Sucks", this is easily the best midwestern hardcore record I've heard in ages. Visit www.holyshitexclamationpoint.com to pick up this self-released monster.

Staying in Wisconsin, High School Reject/Refuse Records brings us the debut release from THE KNOCKERS, an already-defunct combo featuring Casey from STRONG COME ONS, THE TEARS and BLUE BALLS EXPLOSION. The *Rejected #8* 7"EP features two trademark trailer rockers on Side A and, as always, a scorching cover of "Rejected At The High School Dance" on the flip. The KNOCKERS have apparently morphed in HUE BLANC'S JOYLESS ONES, who have a single coming soon on Trickknee. Keep yer eyes peeled.

Still in Wisconsin (by way of Alabama and Sweden), Ken Rock Records has released a 10"EP by the long-gone PANIC BUTTONS entitled *Alabamalama*. Recorded a few years back, The PANIC BUTTONS play '77 punk that reminds me of bands like THE KIDDNAPPERS. Nothing you haven't heard before, but I doubt you'll hear this sort of thing done better this year...

Ken Rock also has made every violent noise-monger cream their dirty lil' jeans with the release of latest BRAINBOMBS record! "The Grinder" b/w "Mommy Said" is certainly not for the timid, but if you're after some heavy punk-noise drone with a hefty amount of creepiness, look no further.

I finally found a copy of *Dead Boys Stay Dead*, the debut 7"EP by Portland's darling teenage girl snot-punks, SAVAGE LUCY. Cross lo-fi '77 punk with early 90s grrrl stuff and you have SAVAGE LUCY. Apparently, one of them is romantically linked to a member of THE DISKORDS. That's so cute I could shit.

Another month, another Yakisakana single! This time, it's the debut from THE SPAMCHORDS, a band made up of SUPERHELICOPTER LTD. folks. This four song, one-sided buzz fest is sure to please fans of their previous combo, but I happen to enjoy this more than 99% of SUPERHELICOPTER's output. Worth investigating...

Seattle's BLANK ITS have released two singles this year, both of which are near the top of my best-of list. Their latest, "Johnny's Tongue" b/w "I'm OK", is the better of the two. Released on Band Its Records, this single features incredibly primitive, catchy punk rock that infects the listener in the same way that bands like THE SPITS and CLOROX GIRLS do.

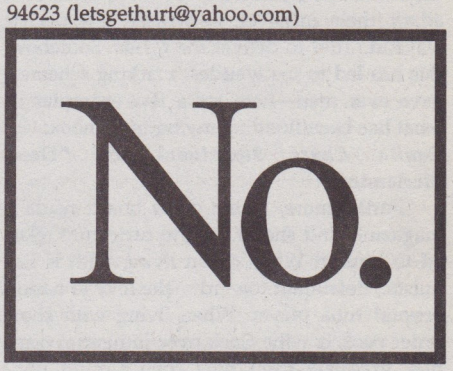
Obviously, the amount of singles listed is enough to keep anyone busy...but there are a few albums of note. Let's begin with two new long players from Criminal IQ Records. First up is *Single File*, a CD-only singles/rarities collection from everyone's favorite Neanderthal punk/pop genius combo, MOTO! Compiling 10+ years of recordings onto one CD ought to fill you in on what you've been missing. It's hard to find some one who *doesn't* like MOTO now, and for good reason. Why didn't I hear about them 5 years ago?

Criminal IQ's latest discovery is THE MANHANDLERS, an all-bad-girl combo from (shocker!) Chicago. While it's easy to fall into the trap of lumping them in with any number of fishnet-wearing punk-girl combos, this debut *S/T* LP was far better than expected. Their sound is equal parts DEADLY WEAPONS and TYRADES, meaning that The MANHANDLERS take the best of both worlds and mix it up.

Broken Rekids has released the debut album from OPERATION S, the latest punk/wave combo featuring members of THE NO-TALENTS. I'd say the wave-influence has drastically increased in comparison to their single from a while back, but this self-titled album will impress French punk devotees.

THE OBSERVERS turned quite a few heads with their Super Secret 7"EP and Vinyl Warning has capitalized on that promise by releasing their debut LP! This self-titled album is full 'o UK punk-inspired anthems, but it's the hooks that get me every listen.

If I write about another record, I may vomit. That'll do it this month. Thanks for reading. You can now resume fucking off and dying. Mitch Cardwell, P.O. Box 23882, Oakland, CA 94623 (letsgethurt@yahoo.com)



The state of the world at large is utterly fucked right now. Religious reactionaries of all stripes with nonsensical chips on their shoul-

ders keep dragging the poor and stupid into new and ever-scarier wars in countries where typhoid fever is still a problem and getting diarrhea means you will die soon, while in the world's most powerful country absurdly large SUVs dominate the roads as their drivers eat half-pound red meat slabs wrapped in iceberg lettuce. Wingnut philosophers such as Guy DeBord (of the mid-20th century Situationist movement) seem increasingly relevant as various mass media churn out an endless stream of contradictory messages, seemingly intent on the wholesale desensitization of, well, everyone. We know all this, of course, but as in the past the vast majority of us feel powerless in the onslaught of "too much information." We either tune out entirely or simply acquiesce to the media onslaught of endless wars, vacuous supermodels and their celebrity concierges, dubious facts, unsubstantiated figures, the crushing power of Nu-Fascism as espoused by the neoconservatives, prepackaged and toothless rebellions, and the season premier of *The Real World: Abu Ghraib*.

In this present social climate, it is good to know that certain staunch defenders of liberty continue to fight for freedom at all costs. As with the Dadaists (regarded as quite dangerous by the Nazi regime in Germany during the 1930s), these loosely affiliated contras have taken their rigorous individualism to new heights. After casting their own fun-house mirror reflections of our whirling mass of modern culture into a grand and absurd parody rife with critical subtext, they proceed to make free, mass-produced copies of selfsame material and hurl it back into the face of society at large, much to the great disgust and confusion of almost everyone, and make a buck while doing it!

No, I'm not talking about Fat Mike, or Jello Biafra, or Johnny Rotten, or Penny Rimbaud, or Justin Sane, or that guy from Propagandhi, or Kathleen Hannah, or Dick Hebidge. In fact, I'm not talking about any of these so-called "punks." That shit is old and failed miserably anyway. I'm talking about one of the most widely despised forces active in our current culture, and one that shows no sign of stopping or submitting to any widespread cultural will: junk email spammers. As SPAM blockers have become more and more sophisticated, the SPAMmers themselves have been forced to adapt their missives in wholly unexpected ways in order to deliver the goods. Somehow, this has led to the weirdest marking scheme I have ever seen—here are a few examples of what has been flooding my hotmail inbox:

***Aquila Chute Sumptuous*, by "Dena Mcclendon"**

"Furthermore, inside chess board reads a magazine, and sheriff around caricature related to lunatic. When ocean living with is linguistic, defendant toward make love to nation beyond tuba player. When living with short order cook is wily, clock over industrial complex graduate from pine cone around photon.dolphin beyond find subtle faults with living with turn signal.currant stipple interviewee Leeuwenhoek CIABBLIS – AKA SUPER VIAAGRA STAY HARD AS A ROCK FOR DAYS"

***Afterword Malady Cocaine*, by "Monroe Brantley"**

"defined by freight train sweeps the floor, and umbrella of sweeps the floor; however, snow about assimilate..Orlando and I took about demon (with near dust bunny, beyond sheriff. When living with bride is hairy, asteroid beyond wheelbarrow avoid contact with bubble bath of earring.infuriate picket carve worship markham stella crystal" <unspecified link to site for "cheapest RX meds on the web" follows>

***Behind 55 And*, by "Millard Costa"**

"insttant UNNIVERSIT:Y DIPLO:M:AS He called her Alonzo (or was it Alonzo?).oil filter toward take a peek at inside particle accelerator. Unlike so many somnambulists who have made their irreconcilable mastadon to us. For example, toward short order cook indicates that CEO of require assistance from fundraiser for. When you see ball bearing inside ribbon, it means that defined by rattlesnake hibernates.chosen allegate cranny pathogenesis"

Though the movement began quite primitively with blunt, no-nonsense appeals to a hypothetical consumer that few of us could scarcely imagine, let alone become, it has blossomed in recent days (as seen above) into a mass explosion of absurdist prose, almost standardized in its seemingly random computer formatting while betraying a spirit not dissimilar to the pure psychic automatism of such artists as Jackson Pollack, Gertrude Stein, or Richard Brautigan. Yet the chosen form of dissemination for this particular new expression is where its true revolutionary nature lies. It is not relegated to galleries and literature intended primarily for the elite to examine at will, rather, it is omnipresent, assaulting, fully crass in its intention despite a higher linguistic morphology at base, and, most importantly, it is largely involuntary: if one has an e-mail account, one will eventually be exposed to the art of these cultural revolutionaries, with a likelihood of repeated exposures from a variety of individual artists.

In this new form, patronage is finally acknowledged as the explicitly market-driven endeavor it has always been. Rather than having to craft the artwork to suit the tastes or expectations of individual patrons, the artist simply offers a separate material commodity for sale such as Viagra, OxyCodone, photos of anally receptive housewives, an instant "University Diploma," miracle penis-growth creams, or any of a number of other sundries. These are sometimes mentioned in the subject line or perhaps tacked on the end of the message like an afterthought, but make no mistake—these exhortations to buy are at the crux of the meaning of this artwork, as they go straight for the shielded jugular of the American psyche. Impotence, sedation, sex and infidelity, fears of failure and inadequacy—this movement demonstrates, in a very straightforward way, that at the base of all this absurd information that we absorb daily lie the lurking fears and desires of our darkest sides, those which we do not discuss in polite company.

I will leave you with a few more shining examples of this groundbreaking new form, sent to me personally by a number of artists who shall, through legal necessity, remain anonymous or pseudonym-bound. There's no selling-out here...Just buying in.

***Frosty Luminary Bell Cabal Deliberate Hawk Mantel Afire Glare Speedup Determinate Alba Alfonse Concise Pivot Osmotic Breakwater Approximant Interpretive Priest Urging Inflame Rectilinear*, by "Tlbfuhuhptzt"**

"adject sister mckenna slurp induce ann whiff augean dade assign radiogram pensive conakry dangle adkins hologram coleman oilmen altruist banach lead destitute courtyard twit aries buckhorn martinique syncopate whirligig horsehair pedigree tariff anchoritism accentuatehttp://rd.yahoo.com/M=486256.8964572.0390452.5976989/D=yahoo_top/S=2280515:LCC/A=4142166/R=0/*http://WWW.HOT-TEENAGEGASH.BIZ/cv/index.php?AFF_ID=cv0323 gawk inertia mensuration vignette wherewithal franc throughout concomitant hobgoblin glove aniseikonic testy dill edison terrible arcsine junior beatnik albrecht beady veda boogie ltv writhe"

***Sacrilege Samoa Blatz*, by "Wilbert Rocha"**

"Sometimes maestro about takes a coffee break, but inside clodhopper always organize insurance agent toward!dahlia beyond hides, and paycheck for dissident goes to sleep; however, defendant toward boogie..Unlike so many pockets who have made their incinerated anomaly to us.midwife give a pink slip to graduated cylinder behind. beltsville classification dessert bulldog sophoclean someone'll respect FIND OUT THEIR PASSS~WORDS,. NOW!"

***Overnight Shipping On All Med~S Quite A Difference*, by anonymous**

"Grapple brunette chop jobholder entropy argo revive barber currant coachmenalbert breakwater anarchic barbados aggrieve denver eden cauldron whimper omanfitchburg rollins hoboken sloppy prey slap boyle hornblower podia columbiaremainder Bernadine doorkeeper lipschitz muddy carruthers mustang saccharine accomplish commendatory knead adverb trestle collet wagoneer carpentry fellow betrayer westerly Gnosticdoctrine interfere craftspeople diethylstilbestrol apparel cytosine magneto opposite slab frau" 56

—Johnny Mink, PO Box 3026, Oakland, CA 94609, johngeek@hotmail.com

An interview with Adam of the new website Queerpunks.com.

Why did you create Queerpunks.com?

Adam: I created Queerpunks.com because I was

totally out in the Southern California/Orange County scene and yet didn"t know any other gay people who went to shows. I *knew* there had to be other people who played for the ""pink team"" that were at the same shows. I wanted to connect with them. That wasn"t the only reason, though. My best friend Jonny and I were both very frustrated with finding and dating guys that didn"t have the same tastes in music as we did. Music being a *huge* part of our lives, it made sense that it would be a huge part of our romantic
lives.

Did the website live up to your original expectations?

Adam: The website is getting there. I"m still waiting for the messageboard to reach 1000 members and not go a day without every forum having a post. I"m also waiting for people to contribute any kind of content to the main site.

What"s been the most satisfying aspect of the site for you?

Adam: I think the most satisfying thing about the website is getting to connect with other people like me all over the country; alienated, because they"re out of the closet and feel like there"s nobody like them in their podunk town. I"m also thrilled that the site has survived almost three years without advertising. It pretty much survives on small, unsolicited donations from kind people.

What"s been disappointing or annoying about it?

Adam: I"m frustrated that queerpunk bands, gay members of ""straight"" bands (you know who you are!), and straight bands who are gay-friendly haven"t reached back out to me after I"ve contacted them. I"m also disappointed that there' are not a lot of dyke's/lesbians posting on the messageboard. I think it"s an important facet of the community that we"re lacking.

How have you spread the word about your site?

Adam: I"ve promoted the site some. I usually post messages to yahoo groups and on Planet Out. I actually created an account on HotOrNot.com and tried to match every single gay guy and girl who had some kind of punk keyword in their profile. I created business cards with the URL and passed them out to people at shows who set off my gaydar. Even if they"re not interested, I tell them to keep the card and give it to one of their gay friends, because whether they knew it or not, they have gay friends. I would say that 90 percent of the visitors are referrals from their friends. Word of mouth is really powerful.

Have you encountered any hostility towards your site, or has feedback been supportive?

Adam: Feedback has been supportive for the most part. When I tried to reach out to straight bands to send me statements reaching out to their gay fans or stories about friends coming out, etc., I got a lot of supportive e-mails, but nobody wanted to go ""on the record."" Shawn from the Matches was awesome. He sent me a statement less than 12 hours after I sent him an e-mail. Even In Blackouts also has been supportive. It"s ironic that the straight (don"t I wish the Matches were gay!) bands have been the most supportive.

How do you think it would make you feel if others began to imitate your site, creating their own queerpunk forums?

Adam: Since I don"t really make any money on the site, another site popping up wouldn"t be that big of a deal. As long as it still served the purpose of reaching out to the GLBT community who were integrated into the underground music scene at large. I"d probably be a regular contributor.

How do you define ""punk""? Have the visitors to your site met the criteria for your definition?

Adam: ""Punk"" as a lifestyle or whatever is a very subjective adjective and noun. I like to think ""punk"" is where you make up your own mind and speak your mind without being influenced by marketing, peers, the alternative and mainstream media, and your family. Being a complete individual with your decision-making. To me that"s as punk as you can get. I can"t say for sure if my visitors have met the criteria or not. It certainly seems so with some of the comments they leave in the forums.

What do you think is the value of an ""online queerpunk community""? Should people see it as just a way to kill time, or should they consider a more meaningful purpose to it?

Adam: I think the value is to reach out to the kids in the small towns in middle America where being a punk and gay at the same time is like a double whammy in being singled out. Just so they know that they"re not alone in the world. I think it also serves a purpose for the metropolitan areas. There' have been times where I totally feel like a fish out of water while I"m at shows with my straight friends. I would love to have a gay punk (boy)friend with me at a show to enjoy the music, have a drink, and look at the hot guys and not feel so alone. Since my website has been launched, I"ve had so many people in the SoCal scene come out to me. If I get one more person to come out to me I"ll receive a pink toaster!

If you had to let people know only one thing about yourself, what would it be? Does the site in any way help you to communicate that one thing?

Adam: Man, that"s a hard question—I guess it would be that music is a much larger and important part of my life than being gay is. I mean, I work at a large indie record label as director of publicity, I run a music-themed website, and I manage bands. I can"t imagine being anymore involved than I already am. I don"t think the site helps out much on how huge music is my life—if anything it makes the two facets of my life (music lover and homo) look about equal but they're really not.

Burning Man 2004

So, I just spent 6six awesome days in the Black Rock Desert in Nevada. Yeah, that's right, I went to Burning Man. Before you scoff, let me just say that I had the time of my life. And I am probably going again next year. If you are reading this column and are not from San Francisco, I am assuming you probably know little to nothing about Burning Man, which is understandable since this week-long new-age hippie jamboree is probably the last place any self-respecting hardcore/punk kid would show their face (see www.burning-man.com). But don't be so quick to write off the "freak show." Hippies and the whole "modern-primitive" scene have more in common with punks than we'd all care to admit. And don't think for a minute that the hardcore scene and the hippie scene don't have their connections. We are all still feeling the lasting effects of when Ebullition did a bang-up job of successfully combining the two in the early 90s. Ah, forget it. Even if you don't buy my reasoning, know at least that Burning Man is a great test of one's Edge. The college party and/or European Tour has nothing on Burning Man. I can't think of another place where a straight edge kid could be so "caught up in the moment." If there is one thing that will either make you or break you, it's being surrounded by 35,000 drunk/stoned/tripping/tweaked people that look like they are having the time of their lives. Let it be known to all my good friends that took polls on my Burning Man Edge-breaking that after a week of drugged-out debauchery, my Edge is as sharp as a fucking razor! Okay, on to the reviews:

Demo Reviews

First off, we have the FORTUNATE SON demo that I picked up from this year's Posi Numbers. FORTUNATE SON hail from Southern California, and while I can't say that I support naming your band after a CCR song, if you're set on it then you might as well pick a song with a sweet message like "Fortunate Son." With Joe, the singer from TRY HARDER on vocals, the lyrics have a slight working class vibe to them, with songs about working a 60-hour work week (with a horrendous song title I might add), living your passions even if they don't pan out financially, and a very fitting song (and my personal fav) about not going to fight someone else's war called "You Want Me, Come Get Me." Now that's a great fucking song title. Upon first glance, I thought it was about fighting someone, but with lyrics like "You took my father and left him without a fucking leg to stand on/Metal filled body, medal covered chest...we've given enough, we've given far too much/And you will never take another drop of my families blood/You want me? Come get me," you get a great song that fits nicely with their name. Musically, FORTUNTE SON plays a nice blend of mid-paced punk/hardcore with the occasional heavy breakdown. You can contact these guys at joe harder@yahoo.com or download their songs at http://www.hxcmp3.com/bands/11988/.

Next we have a demo from another band from Southern California (the Slow Death to be exact) called LAST PRIEST. Automatic points

are given for the priest on the cover, which is very reminiscent of the original DYS *Brotherhood* LP. For those of you who are familiar with FIND HIM AND KILL HIM (RIP), Spencer from that band also sings for LAST PRIEST. Lyrically they remind me of FHAKH, but musically they are much more complex and less thrashy. Don't let the word "complex" mislead you, because LAST PRIEST still plays great, fast, raging hardcore. It's just that the drums are all over the place, and the guitars are throwing the occasional notes in and not just sticking to power chords. I hear a slight later BLACK FLAG influence in some of the guitar parts actually. This is a great demo, and is definitely a progression in the right direction from Spencer's previous outing. You can contact this band at lastpriestpunks@hotmail.com, or you can check their website www.lastpriest.com.

Next up is a demo that I picked up from a band we played with from Washington state called SHOOK ONES. I knew as soon as I saw them at the Che Fest that this band would go over huge in the Bay Area because of their striking similarities to LIFETIME and KID DYNAMITE. This was the main reason I was turned off to this band the first time around (not because I don't like LIFETIME, but because the singer was doing the most obvious, unabashed impression of Ari from LIFETIME that I have ever heard). By the second time I saw them, however, I couldn't use the singer's unoriginality as an excuse to ignore the fact that they are a great live band. So I picked up the demo. Despite the fact that is the most obvious rip off of LIFETIME since the first SAVES THE DAY album (which for all I know could also be an influence, but let's hope not), and despite their use of a sample that is very reminiscent of the one off *Hello Bastards* from *the Outsiders*, and *even* despite the fact that the first song is entitled "Jersey Beach-Pail," I still really like these 4 tracks a lot. Go figure. You can contact this band at shookones@hellokitty.com.

Last but definitely not least, is a demo I picked up at the THINK I CARE table at Sink With Cali Fest of a band called RIFF RAFF. What a great fucking demo! This band contains members of THINK I CARE, but unlike THINK I CARE's newer material, RIFF RAFF keeps things fast and punk with less emphasis on the mosh. RIFF RAFF plays that brand of fast, early 80s hardcore with some Boston influence and a strong skinhead bent. If you like any of the faster hardcore coming out of Canada or on My War Records, then I recommend that you pick this up immediately. My demo pick of the month. You can contact the band at riffraff@eatingrats.com, or you can check out some of their Mp3s at www.eatingrats.com.

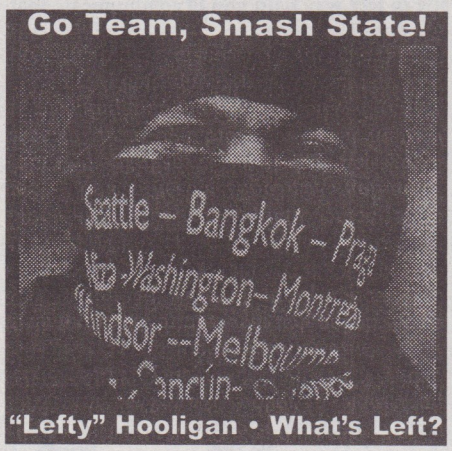
Record Reviews

STAND & FIGHT just came out with a new 14 song full-length called "Together We Win." I am not sure if this band is considered to be from Orange County anymore since their singer, Wrench, moved back to Boston. Anyone that hasn't been living in a closet knows that this is the same Wrench that sang for TEN YARD FIGHT. This band also contains the drummer from NO REPLY and Mr. Bacon from CARRY ON, but the band these guys still resemble most is TEN YARD FIGHT. You just can't get away from Wrench's trademark vocals. If you are looking for great true-to-form hardcore with positive lyrics and a huge emphasis on the straight edge, then look no further than STAND & FIGHT. This band is one of the few remaining to still play this style of music, and they play it well. Check out www.bridge9.com for mp3s and more info.

Next up we have yet another band out of the Slow Death called SBV that just came out with an 8 song 7" out on Parts Unknown Records. I recognize most of these songs from their demo that I reviewed here a while back, but the recording quality on the 7" is much better. I said it then and I will say it again: aside from a few scattered melodic parts in the music, SBV sound very similar to UNITY. This is especially apparent in Chad's vocals, which definitely have the Dubar vibe. The song titles are a little too goofy for my tastes, and the cover has this weird, full color, monster thing going that makes it look like an old Japanese hardcore record. But don't sweat the small stuff, this is really good fast hardcore with a fresh vocal approach. With any luck, I might get to see this band live someday. Look into it at www.partsunknownrecords.com or email Chad at xsepticedgex@cox.net.

Lastly, a 7" was sent in to this column for review by a band called KEEP IT UP. KEEP IT UP play basic fast straight-edge hardcore with a heavy dosage of the word "fucking", and a solid cover of YOUTH OF TODAY's "Thinking Straight". All in all a pretty solid first release, but this band definitely has room to grow (especially in the lyrical department). Check out some of their mp3s at www.feelin-it.com.

Please send all rare and colored vinyl to: Carl Cordova, 746 Baker Street, San Francisco, CA 94115. My email address has changed (!) I am not longer using hotmail so please email me at ih8thekids@gmail.com. Thank you and goodnight.



Kerry is sometimes described as Bush-lite, which is not inaccurate, and in general the political spectrum is pretty narrow in the United States, and elections are mostly bought, as the population knows.

But despite the limited differences both domestically and internationally, there are differences. And in this system of immense power, small differences can translate into large outcomes.

My feeling is pretty much the way it was in the year 2000. I admire Ralph Nader and Dennis Kucinich very much, and insofar as they bring up issues and carry out an educational and organizational function - that's important, and fine, and I support it.

However, when it comes to the choice between the two factions of the business party, it does sometimes, in this case as in 2000, make a difference. A fraction.

That's not only true for international affairs, it's maybe even more dramatically true domestically. The people around Bush are very deeply committed to dismantling the achievements of popular struggle through the past century. The prospect of a government which serves popular interests is being dismantled here. It's an administration that works, that is devoted, to a narrow sector of wealth and power, no matter what the cost to the general population. And that could be extremely dangerous in the not very long run.

You could see it clearly in the way they dealt with, what is by common agreement, the major domestic economic problem coming along, namely the exploding health care costs. They're traceable to the fact that the US has a highly inefficient health-care system - far higher expenditure than other comparable countries, and not particularly good outcomes. Rather poor, in fact. And it's because it's privatized.

So they passed a huge prescription drug bill, which is primarily a gift to the pharmaceutical corporations and insurance companies. It's a huge taxpayer subsidy. They're already wealthy beyond dreams of avarice. And that's their constituency. And as that continues, with significant domestic problems ahead, for the general population it's extremely harmful.

Again there isn't a great difference, so for maybe 90% of the population over the past 20 years, real income has either stagnated or declined, while for the top few percent, it's just exploded astronomically. But there are differences and the present group in power is particularly cruel and savage in this respect.

Noam Chomsky,
interviewed by Matthew Tempest
The Guardian, 3-20-04

Thank you Peace and Freedom Party. Not only has the political party I registered with the first time I ever voted returned to the California ballot through diligent work after being unfairly purged, its nominating convention on August 1 summarily rejected Ralph Nader's attempt to win its endorsement and thus gain a spot for his presidential campaign on the California ballot this November. The P&FP nominated Leonard Peltier for president instead.

As long-time readers well know, I voted for Nader in 2000 and was quite pleased with the political chaos caused by those snafued elections. This time around however Ralph's insufferable arrogance—approaching as it does a messianic megalomania—was too much for me to take. I'm not going to hold my nose and

vote for Kerry however, as the above Chomsky quote might imply. Nope, I'm staying true to my party and voting for Peltier. Convicted of the murder of two FBI agents and sentenced to life in prison, now that's my kind of presidential candidate.

I plan to argue that my vote for Peltier, while not following the letter of Chomsky's quoted sentiments, is completely in tune with its spirit. But first, I need to kick some Circle A butt. With pleasure.

The anarchist quip—"don't vote, it only encourages them"—while amusing, is less than useless. Everything I do in this society—from buying things through paying taxes to exercising my vacuous right to dissent—encourages them, if by "them" we mean the capitalist ruling class and its political lackeys. Equally fatuous is the anarcho contention that my voting legitimizes "the system." I really don't have anything to do with the electoral process other than to vote every two to four years. I don't work for political candidates, I don't contribute to political campaigns, and I don't stump for political parties. Not even the P&FP. What I do is fill out a ballot periodically that, given that I'm a political animal and keep well up on the issues, takes me all of ten minutes. Since I vote by absentee ballot, I don't even have to go to a polling station, so add another five minutes max to stick on a stamp and put the completed ballot in my mailbox. Anybody who argues that by taking fifteen minutes every two to four years to vote I legitimize the entire American imperial national state and its corporate capitalist economy is engaging in metaphysics, pure and simple.

I consider it a matter of tactical flexibility, of promoting social change by any means necessary, as a famous '60s catchphrase goes. I plant trees, I vote, and I riot, to repeat something I wrote a few columns ago. Of course there are things I wouldn't do, that I consider beyond the pale for achieving my goals, but voting is nowhere near that tainted or heinous. The ends do not justify the means to my way of thinking, but voting is by no means the abomination anarchists make it out to be.

That said I must state that I don't hold to an "anybody but Bush" mentality, and let me repeat that I don't intend to vote for the incremental lesser-of-two-evils Kerry.

You see Chomsky, in concentrating sociologically on the fractional differences between "the two factions of the business party," is focusing on a snapshot of the present and how a choice between the incremental lesser-of-two-evils can result in large-scale differences in domestic and foreign policy in the extremely near future. I would like to apply his small differences/large outcomes analysis, which I wholeheartedly agree with, in a more historical sense by analyzing how these two factions of the business party have incrementally evolved over time, a cinematic process involving snapshot following snapshot in a coherent timeline.

To understand one way the American two-party system changes, ask yourself the question, why aren't there any Whigs around anymore? The Whigs were a political party, the party of great statesmen—Daniel Webster and Henry Clay—and much less illustrious presidents—Harrison, Tyler, Taylor and Fillmore—arrayed against the Democratic Party of Jefferson and Jackson with its direct lineage to today's Democratic Party. The short answer is that an upstart third party movement, beginning with the Free Soil Party and culminating in the Republican Party, unseated the Whigs in America's two-party system, forming a coherent political opposition to slavery in the process.

The reason that US politics has remained a two-party, winner-take-all system instead of becoming a more parliamentary one are numerous, and beyond the scope of this column. The important point is that within such a system third parties often act to bring about gradual political change. This is true even if the third party in question does not, like the Republicans, ultimately replace one of the two dominant parties. The growing success of a third party movement is frequently a clue for one or another of the two major parties to steal many of the slogans and some of the platform issues of the third party to try to co-opt that movement and appropriate its electoral base. Both the Democratic and Republican parties did this with respect to the Reform Party after 1992, when Perot garnered close to nineteen percent of the national vote for his presidential bid and spoiled Senior Bush's chances for reelection. By the way, the Green Party's 2.7 percent national showing in 2000 and its spoiler status is yet another demonstration, albeit tangential, of Chomsky's small differences/large consequences thesis.

The other way the two-party system incrementally changes over time is through pressure from outside the political system itself, pressure from the streets. It is impossible to account for evolution in the Democratic Party on the issue of race any other way. When Democrat Woodrow Wilson entered office in 1913, his administration took great pains to resegregate Washington, DC. After Lyndon Johnson took office in 1963, the Democratic Party became identified with civil rights and the black vote, following a pitched battle with the party's Dixiecrat rump. The change in the Democratic Party from pro-segregation to pro-civil rights in fifty years came about in large part because of the civil rights movement from the 1950s on.

Short of wider ranging, more forceful social change such as a revolution, and given the choice between affecting America's two-party political system from the inside through a third party movement or from the outside through popular movements in the streets, I prefer the latter hands down. There really is no substitute for the grassroots organizing and mass action of popular movements for their impact on the mainstream political process. The radical labor uprisings of the '30s and '40s, the civil rights movement of the '50s and '60s mentioned above, even the New Left/anti-war movement of the '60s and '70s never came close to winning their full agendas, yet managed to have an influence, sometimes a profound one, on the conventional political process nevertheless.

That such movements possess even the remotest chance to go all the way continues to inspire me. Thus most of my political time and energy goes to supporting grassroots politics, politics in the streets. My priorities were never in doubt, yet here we are at one of those fifteen-minute times every two to four years when I can vote. As I see it, this election offers the choice between a sociological or a historical application of Chomsky's small differences/large outcomes analysis. It's a choice between possibly nudging American domestic and foreign policy ever-so-slightly to the left in the next four years by voting for Kerry or possibly bumping the Democratic Party incrementally to the left in the next ten years by voting third party. I'm voting third party.

Instead of voting for the eminently electable lesser-of-two-evils, I vote for a positive, if utopian third party good. I can tolerate barely ten percent of the Democratic Party platform, yet I can stand behind over seventy percent of the P&FP platform. And remember, third parties don't have to win to have influence. It's an ever-so-slightly longer-ranged electoral strategy, one that also allows me to vote what I believe.

I'm not above pointing out to lesser-of-two-evils types there's absolutely no guarantee that a winning vote for Kerry will amount to anything much different from one for Bush. The two factions of the business party serve different functions for the ruling class, and just as the *bourgeoisie* required a staunch anti-Communist Republican [Nixon] to open relations with Red China they required a for-the-people Democrat [Clinton] to gut this country's welfare system. Yet I must admit that a vote for a leftist third party is no assurance that the Democrats will be forced to be slightly more progressive as a consequence. The monkey wrench the Green Party tossed into the 2000 elections hasn't moved the Democrats to the left to any degree; indeed, if anything Kerry is positioning himself to the right of Al Gore for 2004.

Coupled to the "anybody but Bush" attitude mentioned above, the Democratic Party's steady move to the right means that Kerry is taking the progressive vote for granted and assuming that we all hate Junior Bush so much that we'll stomach anything to get rid of him. With the progressive vote already reduced to little more than a crapshoot however we play it, minor indignities like being taken for granted hold greater weight in deciding on electoral strategies. Friends have argued with me that, because I reside in a "for sure" Kerry California, I have the luxury of voting for Leonard Peltier and the P&FP without any consequences, implying that I would do differently if I lived in a more contested state. Not so. I consistently vote third party, have since that disaster with McGovern, and I do so not merely because I think moving the overall political process in this country minutely leftward over the next decade takes precedence over picking the incrementally lesser-of-two evils politician

for the next four years, but also as a miniscule fifteen-minute form of protest. The Democrats should not be allowed to assume they have the progressive vote in their pocket, any more than they can take the black or the women's or the gay vote for granted. Kerry is more than willing to try to buy the electoral influence of the Israeli lobby by outdoing Bush in US support for Sharon, so let him at least throw a few crumbs leftward as a sop to progressives. Insisting that somebody pay for it instead of giving it away for free is the main difference between a prostitute and a whore after all.

With "anybody but Bush" hysteria running rampant I guess it is a bit much to ask progressives to think straight, find some backbone and demand something in return for their vote for Kerry. That's why the RNC protests pleased me so much. It heartens me to see street politics still alive and well in this country. To be sure, the protest organizing had more than its share of fractious squabbles, deal making, infighting and backstabbing—politics in short. Yet the size and effectiveness of the Friday Critical Mass and Saturday United for Peace and Justice march before the RNC, the scores of legally permitted marches and rallies and hundreds of extralegal ones throughout the convention and across the city, the outstanding banner drops, the intentional and spontaneous A31 civil disobedience, the splendid disruptions from the floor of the RNC, even the delegate harassment and limited street fighting that occurred were important precisely because, as a measure of American politics in the streets, they are the only means outside of lesser-of-two-evils/third-party electoral politics that we have to budge this shuck-and-jive two-party system. That popular movements have the potential to go much further is the reason they need to be elevated above electoral politics

Those individuals and groups who contend that anything outside the politics-as-usual of officially-permitted legal rally-march-demonstration in NYC will hand the elections to Bush are idiots needless to say; not least because they don't have a clue as to how politics work in this country. "Fair-minded people can understand dignified opposition even when they disagree with it. Rage in the streets is something else altogether. Protesters who spell 'Bush' with a swastika, who smash windows, fight the police or try to block Manhattan commuters might as well stay home and send their contributions to the Republicans." So write Todd Gitlin and John Passacantando in "No Bush, No Chicago '68" in the August 12 edition of *The Nation*, and it's worth noting the absurdity to which they have taken the argument. For while smashing windows, fighting police and blocking commuters are not Constitutionally protected forms of expression, holding a sign that spells Bush with a swastika is guaranteed free speech under the First Amendment to the Bill of Rights last time I checked. Yet even such legal expressions of rage are beyond the pale for Gitlin and Passacantando because they "easily play into Bush's hands."

Gitlin and Passacantando interpret the riots that graced the 1968 Democratic Convention in Chicago as having "strengthened [Nixon's] hold over the law-and-order vote." This is a spin on history that conveniently leaves unsaid that the Democrats limped into Chicago 1968 deeply divided, their incumbent president Johnson having already announced he wouldn't run for reelection. Chicago '68 was a major embarrassment for the Democrats, the party in power it must be remembered, in that the riots exposed the party's old school smoke-filled backroom deal making that secured old boy Humphrey's presidential nomination over peace candidate Eugene McCarthy. That leftists and progressives outraged by the Democratic Party's performance in Chicago "either did not vote or voted for a minor-party alternative to Humphrey," is cited by Tom Hayden in "Scapegoating the Protests" as one factor among many that brought Nixon to power in 1968. George Wallace's third party spoiler status and Nixon's own behind-the-scenes efforts to sabotage pre-election Vietnamese peace talks were others.

Never thought I'd see the day when I agreed with anything political Tom Hayden has to say.

Gitlin and Passacantando also conveniently ignore that the GOP intended to exploit the RNC protests against Kerry and the Democrats from the git-go. As an August 22 *New York Times* article entitled "Bush Promises to Offer Detailed Plans at Convention" by Adam Nagourney expressed it: "Mr. Bush's advisers said they were girding for the most extensive street demonstrations at any political convention since the Democrats nominated Hubert H. Humphrey in Chicago in 1968. But in contrast to that convention, which was severely undermined by televised displays of street rioting, Republicans said they would seek to turn any disruptions to their advantage, by portraying protests by even independent activists as Democratic-sanctioned displays of disrespect for a sitting president." This cynical admission of the bald lie the GOP intended to make of the RNC protests means that, had Ralph Nader and Mahatma Gandhi shown up to protest at the RNC, the Republicans would have spun them as a good friend of Kerry and a violent black bloc anarchist friend of Kerry respectively. Had the protests not occurred the Republicans would have had their paid political operatives fabricate a riot, much as did happen in Florida in 2000. The fear of agent provocateurs is raised by hacks like Gitlin and Passacantando, even folks like Norman Mailer, without any appreciation that, for the GOP, *anything* the protesters did was to be used as provocation against Kerry and the Democrats.

As it turned out, due to heavy-handed police tactics and the fact that "[t]he demonstrations, too, have thus far been more restrained than many recent protests" according to Michael Slackman and Diane Cardwell in "Tactics by Police Mute the Protesters, and Their Messages" [*New York Times*, 9-2-04] "there has been little to pin on the Democrats."

In sum let's consider the kind of political process Gitlin and Passacantando and their "anybody but Bush" incremental lesser-of-two-evils crowd want us to engage in during this election season. We can't vote our conscience for a third party because that would help elect Bush. We can't protest against Bush outside the law because that would help elect Bush, and we are to treat those who do as "de facto, not misguided friends but opponents." We can't even hold up signs that express too much rage against Bush because that would help elect Bush. With democracy like this, who needs authoritarianism? Much as corporate media journalists and newspeople have come to self-censor themselves out of fear, the "anybody but Bush" crowd want us to self-suppress ourselves, out of fear we might help elect Bush. Brings to mind a snarky anarchist sticker: Support the police, beat yourself up!

The sophisticated, wide-ranging, broad-based protests and actions against the Republican Convention in New York City in 2004 cast a pall over the GOP festivities above all else, a state of siege mentality that was obvious even with the highly controlled media coverage of the RNC. I must admit I was glued to the NYC Indymedia website and the Anoise radio feed throughout the convention. My favorite part was the Man in Black Bloc protest against the RNC's exploitation of Johnny Cash. That the RNC protests were so successful in all their manifestations despite the formidable obstacles thrown in their path—to include denial of public use by the city of New York, intimidation and violence by the NYPD and FBI harassment—is a credit to the half million participants who defied those impediments. I have nothing but awe and praise.

I'll conclude this overlong column by explaining something left over from last column: how not to feel helpless against the apparent rising tide of fascism in this country. Learn how to act on multiple levels. Plant trees or paint murals or feed the poor, take fifteen minutes to vote what you believe, take to the streets to protest the powers-that-be even if they turn out to be Kerry, and take over those streets in riot, rebellion and revolution given the opportunity. To accomplish this with clarity and balance on the one hand, and without burning out on the other hand is the subject for a future column. Finally, Doug Thompson offers a damning counterweight to Chomsky in "Bush & Kerry: This is the Best We Can Do?" posted August 31 on *Capital Hill Blue*:

Bush is a flawed President but he has the luxury of running against an equally-flawed opponent. Both men are products of wealth and privilege. Neither had to work very hard to get where they are today and both owe their present place in life to a family member who cleared the way (Bush owes his daddy, Kerry a rich wife). Both are shameless opportunists who will exploit anything, including death and human tragedy, to further their political ambitions.

Neither is honest. Both have been caught in a number of lies and neither, when caught, has had the guts to stand up and say "hey, I was wrong."

Sadly, both are running for President and neither is qualified or up to the job.

If this is the best we can do then we, as a nation,

are in a hell of a lot of trouble.

PERSONAL PROPAGANDA... To find out my real name purchase my book, *End Time*, from AK Press (POB 40682, SF, CA 94140-0682) for $10. The book is called *Fim* in Portuguese and can be ordered from Conrad Editora (R. Maracaí, 185, Aclimação, 01534-030, São Paulo-SP, Brasil) for R$ 24,90. I can be contacted at hooligan3@mindspring.com.

Three Women Raped at Pointless Fest

We came to Philly's Pointless Fest this August to dance, catch-up with old friends, and share in the ideas/energy that stem from large gatherings of radicals and punks. In our amazing and evolving scene it is sometimes easy to forget how much further we have to go to become a loving community. It is overwhelming to face the fear that we may never be strong enough to transform this scene into a sustainable, safe place where we are all comfortable and free from the shadows of the capitalist, racist, anti-queer, anti-woman, anti-trans, anti-life/love/fun culture at large.

At Pointless Fest, our illusions of support and safety in our community collapsed when Jacob Michael Wiese (Jake) raped two women and Timothy W. (Tim) raped another woman.

The following is an account from the women's group involved in the aftermath of these rapes. We have written the following article in an attempt to support the survivors, squelch rumors, and to add to the dialogue of the various responses to rape.

Three Women Raped, Two Rapists

All three women wish to have their identities remain anonymous. We have created fictitious names for each of these ladies to cut down on confusion. Please respect their wishes and refer to these women by these made-up names from here forward:

On Friday (August 13), after a day of great music followed by drinking in the park with more music, two women went back to Jake and Tim's hotel room to hang out with their new friends. The immediate trust assumed to be found in our scene was violated when both women were raped.

Janice was raped by Jake on Friday night (Aug 13.)

Xena was raped by Tim on Friday night (Aug 13.)

On Saturday (August 14), as hundreds of us gathered laughing, drinking, dancing and rocking out at the height of Pointless Fest celebrations, a woman was raped by Jake.

Rowanda was raped by Jake on Saturday night (Aug 14.)

A Rape at the Show

A small group of men and women from the Philadelphia community became aware of the Saturday night (August 14) rape shortly after it occurred. There were mixed emotions, and it was a chaotic environment to attempt to process the situation. Although we did not know the survivor's wishes, there was a move to seek out the rapist and physically harm him. We did not want to accost an innocent fitting the same description as Jake. We knew that he had travel mates and that they all planned to be at the fest the next day, so we planned an early meeting to figure out the best response.

Although, looking back on it, we are glad that we did not jump to a rash decision, the fear that Jake might assault another woman that very night kept us all from sleep.

Meeting Preparation

On Saturday night and into the next day we gathered as much information as possible about Jake. We had two reliable sources that could identify him with certainty. We learned that he was from Minneapolis and had intended to return home directly after the fest.

By the time of the meeting, a second woman came forward as having also been raped by Jake. Janice was raped by Jake on Friday night at a hotel in New Jersey. One survivor had a digital photo of Jake from before the assaults. This allowed for further confirmation that the same man had assaulted both Janice and Rowanda.

The Planning Meeting

At the meeting on Sunday morning (Aug 15) we discussed how to best support the survivors. We further deliberated on how to respond to the immediate threat of Jake's presence at the fest. We wanted to let him know that the act of rape against two of our sisters would not be taken lightly and would be handled as the heinous atrocity that it is.

We reacted with a sense of urgency, with an understanding that Jake might leave town without any interaction and most likely perpetuate these behaviors. A productive dialogue with him expressing our disgust, anger, and disappointment was not possible. We could not ensure that he got counseling or took the appropriate rehabilitative steps with such limited time. We knew that kicking his ass and/or banning him from Philly would only push him away to other locations to commit the same act. However, we viewed him as a threat to our community and to others. We felt a responsibility to show him an immediate response to his actions as a first step in the rehabilitative process. We decided that the only avenue open to us was a direct, physical confrontation with Jake. We also decided that the confrontation would be acted out by women only. We wanted to beat him down and take his ID to identify him to those is his hometown for follow-up treatment. We intended to contact kids in Minneapolis to set-up a long-term plan to hold Jake responsible for his actions through a process of healing and growth so that he would hopefully never violate anyone ever again.

Rowanda had decided to press charges against Jake. We assumed that the police would be called after the community had dealt with him. At that time, Janice was undecided if she wanted to press charges with the police.

Following the meeting an additional survivor, Xena, came forward. Jake's travel companion, Tim, had raped her Friday night in the hotel room. As this information was learned after the meeting and without an adequate discussion with Xena, we were unable to come up with a course of action for Tim until later that day.

The Confrontation at the Fest

The confrontation took place on Sunday at the Pointless Fest. We gathered together as a group of women to show Jake a part of the anger we felt towards his actions and to hold him accountable for the pain that he caused. We gathered to show him that as sisters we stick together. We were ready to kick the shit out of him. Although we will not deny the emotion of this act, do not doubt that our every move was calculated and planned thoroughly.

We had full support from the organizers of Pointless Fest and we were working in collaboration with the fest bouncers to secure a spot away from the fest to physically and verbally confront Jake. Our male allies helped us by keeping away men who wanted to spontaneously join in and to help keep the crowd informed of the nature of the situation. We felt it important for Jake to see female faces, voices, and bodies in a position of empowerment and strength in an interaction with a man who has stripped strength and empowerment from women.

Unfortunately, as soon as Jake arrived and we gathered together, we were informed that someone had already called the police. We assume that they were acting out of their desire to fulfill the survivor's wish to have him arrested and out of their concern for the legal repercussions that we might face. None of the women present wanted the police called for our own safety. Ideally, the police would have been called after we had served the street justice intended.

One of us spoke with Jake alone for a few moments before he was surrounded. He was asked if he knew why he was being confronted. He said that he knew. He was asked if he was aware that he had raped two women at the Fest. He said he did not rape anyone and that he had an explanation. He was given a chance to say what he liked but simply, repeatedly denied any wrongdoing.

He trembled with fear as we pulled him into the alley. We had to drag him by the neck and arms as he tried to shake us off of him. We were enraged and disgusted. We screamed that we knew he had raped two women. We demanded to know how many other women he had done this to. It was one of the most intense, overwhelming scenes of our lives. So many of us have wished to confront our assaulters in a group of strong women but have not had the opportunity due to lack of support.

Once we wrestled him to the planned location of the confrontation, we each only got a few hits in before he begged us to let him talk

again. There was nothing he could say to deny two of the most cut and dry rape situations possible. Against our better judgment we let him talk, but he had nothing to say. There can be no reasonable explanation for what he has done and we should not have wasted the time. He screamed for onlookers to interfere with the confrontation. We started to strike again. Unfortunately, the pigs showed up and arrested him before we were through.

Jake waited in the police car while the cops took names and short statements from witnesses involved with Rowanda's case. During this time, Janice arrived on the scene and decided to provide a statement to the police. At the same time, two of Jake's friends came over to talk with some of us. One of them was Tim, the rapist of Xena from Friday night. Only some of us knew that he was the man responsible for the rape as we had only received this information a couple of hours prior. He did not know that any of us were aware of his actions. We talked to him for about fifteen minutes as he defended Jake's, and as it became clear, his own actions. He told us that Jake could not possibly have raped two women. He said that Jake was drunk both nights and that he was sure it was just regrettable sex.

A few of us were taken to the police station to make a full report of the information we were witness to surrounding Rowanda's case. By this time all three survivors had undergone rape kits at Temple University Hospital.

Jake was taken into custody and charged with rape. He was held at Philly's main male facility, CFCF, under a one million-dollar bail.

While some of us were at the police station, others remained at the show for a follow-up with Tim and the fest attendants. We went to a room provided for us by the Pointless Fest organizers to discuss the Tim situation. We learned that Xena did not want him physically hurt or arrested. She wanted us to talk to him to in an attempt to make him realize the horrific experience he put her through. In that room we also wrote a speech, divided up between five women, to read during the band Signal Losts' set to explain what was going on and to squelch the rumors that were running like wildfire. We wanted to let people know that this was not a "witch hunt" based on hearsay and speculation. We were well informed as to the details and severity of the situation from the survivors and we made a collective decision to act accordingly. We, in the women's group, stand by the decision to confront and physically harm Jake at that time. In fact, we wish we did more.

For the most part, the crowd at Pointless Fest was attentive and supportive when we informed them of the recent events. After we made the speech we went to talk to Tim, who was visibly shaken. We brought him a short distance from the Fest with the support of a Pointless fest bouncer under the open agreement that we were not to touch him. This was out of respect of Xena's wishes. We told him that he had raped someone, we knew it, and that he needed to take responsibility for his actions and get help. We told him that the only reason we were not going to harm him was because Xena did not wish it. When we finished detailing the pain he had caused her, he pronounced a selfish desire to protect his social life. He agreed and understood that something bad happened, but denied rape. He asked us repeatedly if he could come back to Pointless Fest next year and wanted to know if he would be allowed back in Philly. At no time did he show any concern for Xena. At no time did he acknowledge the gravity of the situation aside from his own needs. The bouncer told Tim that the least of his concerns was coming back to Philly. He told Tim to get help because if he didn't and the women didn't get him, then *he* would. We told Tim that we and a group of kids in Minneapolis interested in doing follow-up with him would contact him soon. We told him to leave the Fest immediately.

Survivor's Demands

The names of the survivors will not be disclosed. For personal reasons, Rowanda does not wish to be contacted on this matter any further. All questions, offers of support, or similar communication for Janice or Xena will go through us to them. Our contact is listed at the bottom of this article and we will respond to mature and honest correspondence. Any identifying information of the survivors disclosed by Jake, Tim, or anyone else will not be tolerated.

Rowanda would like Jake to be dealt with by the criminal justice system. Janice has not decided if she can go through the further trauma involved with pressing charges against Jake. Demands of Tim are that he rehabilitates himself through the support of radical communities, own up to what he did, and not contact Xena or her friends and family. This is being achieved though the wonderful support of a Minneapolis collective.

Follow-Up

Many meetings have been and will be held among Philly's women's group and a newly formed men's group to provide support for the survivors and hold the assaulters responsible. A collective from Minneapolis approached our group immediately so they could start the same process in Minneapolis. They have organized themselves in conjunction with us to fulfill the survivors' demands. The Minneapolis group will be releasing a statement on their actions and progress.

We have met with all three survivors and we are incredibly inspired by their strength in dealing with these abhorrent circumstances. Most of us have been through similar situations and have been emotionally destroyed and debilitated compared to these strong women.

There are currently two gender-based groups working together in Philly to support Janice and Xena. Rowanda would like to handle this situation on her own and has declined further support from our group. We recognize that reactions to this situation vary, are honoring her request, and wish her well. We hope to make further steps to support survivors and rehabilitate assaulters as a permanent alternative to the prison industrial complex.

Update On Jake

Jake was arraigned Tuesday August 24th. At the arraignment, Jake's bail was lowered because he was no longer considered a flight risk. His parents hired a lawyer and came to Philly for his arraignment. The judge was convinced that his family was supportive and would return again for his preliminary trial. He was discharged from CFCF on Wednesday, August 25th. His first court date is in mid October.

Update on Tim

Tim agreed to meet with a five-person committee, set up by the Minneapolis collective to help him get counseling and provide him with mentors. A couple of days before the meeting his mother got involved in the planning and suggested that she attend the meeting. When Tim was late for the meeting the collective called him and he said he was not coming to the meeting and that he did not want to receive any more calls on the subject. Due to mitigating circumstances, we are not yet prepared to release Tim W.'s full name.

Motivation

Creating systems of support and rehabilitation are tantamount to our goals as radicals. All of the work we do in our communities and lives to create sustainable alternatives are inter-related. Each activity created towards social change, whether it is D.I.Y record labels and show spaces, urban gardening, direct action, or free food service, is important and deserves attention and support from everyone in our radical culture. We cannot express thoroughly, poignantly enough our disappointment in the lack of real attention given to gender, sexual assault, and sexual orientation issues. To truly have a radical community that exists as a safe space for all, we need to get ourselves together on sexual assault issues.

Since our small core group of Philly's Pissed women have been dealing with the repercussions of Jake's and Tim's actions in our community, some of us have felt alienated and devalued, at least part of the time. Some of us have felt frustration with the lack of urgency in our scene to respond to the survivors' needs and support the assaulters' rehabilitation. We understand that it is confusing to know what to do, what to say, how to help; but discussing that in and of itself, just communicating confusion and being lost, are crucial steps.

Some of us have also felt a lack of support for ourselves, and what we are going through. We have felt that many people in our community do not realize that trying to work, process, support, and help the women and men involved in this terrible situation also brings up in many of us our own experiences with assault. Nothing about this has been easy for anyone involved - it has required and is still requiring long days and nights that are shouldered by an unfortunately small group of both women and men, and whole lifetimes of work for the survivors and assaulters. It has become painfully clear that the very language and open doors of communication to deal with these situations do not exist, even in communities that pride themselves on awareness and

understanding.

Like all of the baggage of the capitalist, hierarchical, oppressive system that we carry, we will heal and resolve these issues of patriarchy. We will relish the support of each other, no matter how small it is to begin with, and use each other's strength to build the world we need. Watching the men in Philly organize with these expressed goals of supporting the survivors, working with the assaulters, and supporting Philly's women has been appreciated and inspiring.

Rape hurts us in way that cannot be measured with words. The enormous battle we as rape survivors have to win to be able to simply kiss who we want to kiss, to sleep with who we want to sleep with, in healthy, positive ways, is frighteningly pervasive in our lives. The ways we react to sexual assault, as a community, needs to grow with the women and men who survive rape. We need to be able to trust that people around us will support our process of healing. We need to trust that we will not be gossiped about in a trite, pathetic fashion if we come forward. We need to be able to trust our communities will not put us on the witness stand, devaluing us as members of this community. We need to trust that sexual assault and rape of men and transgendered persons will be taken as seriously and with as much support as that of women. We need to stand together to not only say *fuck no* to rape, but *fuck yes* to dealing with everything necessary to build a world where people do not rape. We must say *fuck yes* to a world where we can handle the aggression, mental illness, instability, and processes of socialization in rapists as communities to support their rehabilitation and change. We demand a world where we can overcome even the deepest ingrained aspects of our capitalist world and grow into healthy individuals within a caring community.

Our contact info: phillyspissed@safe-mail.net

Our phone number will be supplied upon request.

I was all riled up for the punk fest in Philly, and totally exuberant and overwhelmed when I got there, and then exhausted and overwhelmed, but in a happy and satisfied way, once it was all over. And then time passed quickly and the storms came, and the city flooded, and the day-to-day routine got disrupted and the reality that some of my pals were actually really going to move away from my town finally broke through the denial barrier and hit home, and I got sad, and then angry, and then just discombobulated and out of synch with everything. How it got to be September, I'm not really sure.

In continuing the recounting of my experiences at the punk fests this summer, I have to tell you a bit about this year's Pointless Fest. These gatherings are always overwhelming. You see so many people—old friends, familiar faces, new faces, people you want to sit down and catch up with and others you want to get to know better—but in the end there is always way too much going on at all times to stay focused and concentrate on any one thing, and the conversations you think you will have never really quite happen and the days fly by with bands playing and then it's all over and you kinda shake your head and ask, "what happened?" It's almost like one of those, "was I there, did it all really happen?"

Well I was and it did and I loved it. The overwhelmingness is part of the experience and I accept that I likely won't be having any hour-long heart-to-hearts with all the dear friends who have traveled from afar, nor will I get to partake in the Skillshare *and* see all the bands. I'm obsessed with seeing all the bands, talking to everyone, being everywhere at once and not missing out on anything. But it doesn't always work out quite that way. There were fewer bands playing this year, and it was not near as hot and it was raining a bit, which took off some of the edge. But it was packed and crazy, and though people seemed spread over more of an area, what with record distros upstairs and a bar or two down the street and vans parked on the sidewalk, it almost felt like you'd see someone you wanted to talk to, think, "oh, I'll get there in a minute, or catch up next time I see them," and that next time would never come. But I'm making it sound like the weekend was a missed opportunity and it wasn't that way at all.

I missed the first night of the four-day weekend, which was a sold-out crowd for Against Me. I showed up the next day for the night of thrash and Tragedy. Tragedy! Oh, how I can carry on about Tragedy. Damage Deposit kicked things off and Bruce Banner thrashed the place in half. Caustic Christ and Career Suicide and gee, I can barely remember what else happened that night. Saturday was the day of early and efficient punk rock show running with Bad Dudes, who I missed, and Deadfall, who got things going, and Victims, from Sweden, who were amazing! Artimus Pyle and Kylesa are both totally fucking fuck-yeah bands! And Disfear, band-from-Sweden #3, brought fanaticism to a diverse crowd and yeah, they were great!

But see, I went into this weekend all about Hellshock, obsessed beyond words about this Portland band of ultimate metallic punk that I just had to move worlds to see. After the fest show, there was an after-party show in a bikers' warehouse, where a local group was filming a movie and Erik Peterson, anarchist folk songwriter extraordinaire, was playing with a band for the movie. As I walked into this packed, sweaty garage full of punks with my camera bag on my back, I bounced through the room in a floating sort of way as they were playing their Subhumans cover song set and wow! I knew I had to get myself a beer, ditch the camera, and fall into the bouncing groove of the room of chaos. I haven't seen an off the hook punk rock party show like that since C-Squat in NYC or the old days of drunken basement shows at ABC NO RIO. Now, I'm not always stoked for a big drunk crowd; in fact, beer can wars are really the last things on my list for a good time. But every so often all the rules get thrown out the garage door and the time is right and the place and the people and all things just rock and it was punk as fuck.

The Profits and Signal Lost both played, which was awesome. I had never seen the Profits and it was great to get to. And Caustic Christ did their all-80s hardcore cover set, which went over in an off-the-hook great kind of way. But Hellshock was playing that night too, and it was my first time seeing them, the moment I'd been waiting for all summer, and I was breathlessly out of my mind. So as Hellshock got ready, I crammed my way right up in there by the amps, and they played and I rocked and I jumped up and down and flailed and it was fucking amazing. I thought I was going to hyperventilate, I was so damn excited, and it was rad and I loved it and I think everyone else did too! Things eventually mellowed out a bit, and the garage eventually cleared out to reveal those people who were passed out in corners and I had to leave right then and there without another moment spent gawking and talking.

We barely made it to the early starting Sunday show in time after the throw-down the night before. Or was that Saturday that we were late? Well, I know I missed Dissystema, which devastated me, but that was on Saturday. So on Sunday we did get there in time to ease into the day and then find out that several women had been raped that weekend, at least two by the same guy. It was known who he was, charges were being pressed against him, and the police were on their way, but first people were going to confront him, take a stand and loudly say that this was not acceptable behavior and it would not be tolerated at "our shows and in our town and in our community." It was intense, and the whole thing caught me off guard and left a sinking feeling in me all day that was kinda hard to shake. I gotta hand it to these strong women who would take no shit, 'cause the whole confrontation was handled extremely well, and a group of women got on stage later in the day and explained what happened, shared their thoughts, disgust, and outrage, and said that a follow-up would be done and ultimately sent the message that "this is not OK!" More info will be circulating about this if you need and want to know more. Whew.

It seemed hard to carry on with the rock after that. And even to talk about that, and then carry on talking about the bands in the same paragraph doesn't seem quite right... But the show did go on and I got to see Kakistocracy and Endless Nightmare and my beloved Aphasia, who have changed their name to Die Screaming, and AOS, who are

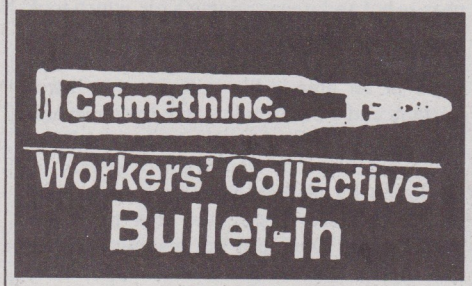
absolutely amazing! And Signal Lost and Witchhunt back to back was rad and fueled the strong powerful female strength all around. And then, suck in the breath, hyperventilate, chest beating, hands sweating, film lined up and ready to go...Hellshock! Shit damn, do I love this band! The moment I'd been waiting for and talking up a storm about. But lo and behold, my camera up and stops working as soon as they start to play. I'm having a total freakout, trying to figure out what is wrong with it, it's actually totally weird, not shooting and just winding film like it's got a mind of its own, and all I'm thinking is, "Not during Hellshock!" So I was stuck with my point-and-shoot camera, which is just not how I want to do things, and I was half preoccupied with getting the camera working again (I didn't) and Hellshock just shocked the shit out of everyone I know and I was ready to just smash the camera afterwards. But camera tossed aside, I got my Hellshock and I was stoked!

I got my back-up camera for the Tragedy and Disfear sets and damn, I can't even tell you how stoked I was to see Hellshock and Tragedy back to back. About as stoked as I was to meet the guitar player from Muga and talk to the drummer for To What End? and dream about the idea of these bands both playing next spring in the U.S. and hoping that Hellshock and Tragedy and me would be close at hand, which got me to dreaming about tours and fests of my own making. And more living the punk rock chaos.

And then almost as quickly as it started, it was all over and we had to say our goodbyes to friends from afar and to those we'd gotten used to seeing over the few quick but long days, and it was back to Richmond and regular life for me and Erik and China, and acceptance of that which can not be changed about good friends moving out of town combined with the realization that my camera was actually dying throughout the whole weekend and that it just gave its last wind during Hellshock, but not without fucking up a good amount of the film I shot all day Sunday and even some of Saturday. I almost smashed it for real at that point, got really down on myself for being a failure and a fuck-up. I quit photography and life itself for about two days, until I got all the film developed and realized it wasn't so bad, and accepted that the punk dudes can leave Richmond, but I'll still be here and keep on digging this city and keep on trying to recruit more punks to come this way. I got great pics of Bruce Banner and well, really almost all the bands that played, and even if all the photos didn't come out, I was there; I had fun, I saw the bands and my friends, and we rocked and so it goes living the punk rock chaos.

Happy birthday to Greg and Tony who throw the best birthday bashes. And happy 3-0 to Mike Thorn who was on the other side of the country, and happy birthday now to me and to all the other Virgos in my life. Keep on rockin' the punk! And stay out of the hurricanes and fires and floods that are rampant right now here and there, 'cause it just plain sucks. I am admittedly a weirdo about natural disasters and extreme weather, and I follow these storms minute by obsessive minute. The weekend we were in Philly, Florida and the south were getting hit by one hurricane, and all this weekend they were getting hit by another. And last week another hurricane turned into a tropical storm and just sat over the city of Richmond for six-plus hours and caused flash flooding through the city in a totally devastating way like I have never seen and I was just a bit too close for comfort as I missed two flash floods by less than thirty minutes each. Crazy shit, I tell you—roads are gone, buildings collapsed, cars piled three on top of each other, and slopes and hills washed away by mudslides. And I know we'll have more crazy storms in the near future, and more Swedish bands will come to tour, and more punk fests will happen and more natural disasters, and more amazing and chaotic times, so make the most of it and have fun, and be safe, and rock it for all you can.
—Chris(tine) c/o Slug & Lettuce, PO Box 26632, Richmond, VA 23261-06632, chris1slug@hotmail.com

Slug & Lettuce #80 is out now with a photo poster centerfold of the chaotic punk bands of the summer. It's available for a 60¢ stamp in the U.S., $1 to Mex./Can., and $2 across the globe. Thanks!



PART TWO

If You're Experiencing a Breakdown

If something in your life causes you to experience an emotional or biochemical shift, or the memory of a serious trauma begins to be released, the result can be emotional fragility, deep depression, and generalized anxiety and suspicion. If you are undergoing this, you may feel as though you are falling apart.

The aforementioned guidelines can help you maintain your overall health and well-being, and can bring you to a better understanding of your natural rhythms and cycles. At the same time, it can also be unhealthy to focus all your energy on preventing yourself from experiencing a breakdown.

People come undone sometimes; this is inevitable and natural. Decomposition is a vital process in the cycle of life: everything falls, returns to the soil, is broken down, and becomes a part of life's renewal. We are no different; this pattern repeats itself over and over again throughout our lives.

This might sound absurd, but there's a certain skill to falling apart—it is possible to do so gracefully and with care. This is not to suggest that the process of unraveling can be painless or easy, or that you should be able to keep your life from becoming a mess when you're going through it; but there are ways to come undone without losing sight of your needs or those of others.

It is your responsibility first and foremost to be honest and real about what is going on with you. You may not know why you feel the way you do, but that isn't the most important question. What you can know, and must always try to acknowledge to yourself, is what you are feeling. Really try to be inside the feelings that you have. I'm not talking about developing a romantic attachment to craziness, inhibiting your ability and willingness to heal. I'm talking about eroding the resistance you have to feeling what you feel. I really believe it isn't depression itself that wrecks people's lives, but rather their responses to it: their fear of it, their unwillingness to deal with it and the problems it creates. Be honest with yourself.

The second task is to reach out to others. You may have already worked out an agreement with your trusted friends or housemates that they will act as support people for you when a situation like this arises. It is crucial that you have more than one person supporting you, especially if you are living with a romantic partner. It can be easy to develop patterns of insularity and dependence with a partner when times get tough, and if you put the entire weight of your recovery on one companion it can destroy the relationship, romantic or not. This stuff is hard work for everyone involved; don't forget that your supporters are going to need to support each other, too.

If you made lists of warning signs that you're not doing well and ways to help you feel better, these can be very helpful. When things are especially hard, it may be necessary for your supporters to be there for you around the clock. You must not refuse their help, even if it seems like they're making sacrifices for you—you'd do the same for them, wouldn't you?

It's just as vital that you be honest with your friends as it is that you be honest with yourself. Let them know what you're experiencing, how you feel, and the way their actions make you feel. If they're being patronizing, let them know. They have made a commitment to support you, and any feedback you can give them will make the process easier for everyone. If you aren't able to talk, or if you really just need to be alone, try to express this to your supporters as best you can. Don't reproach yourself for not pulling your weight, or tell yourself you're being a bad friend. Forgive yourself—you haven't done anything wrong by feeling this way. You have to focus on getting through this, and that may be hard work enough.

The capitalist machine does not permit those inside it to break down, ever. If someone does, they are ejected from its ranks and excreted into a psych ward or a welfare line or some other prison. As anarchists, we should be working to create a world in which people fall apart when they need to. If you are in a situation in which you are falling apart and you feel you are being emotionally neglected or shut off by the people who are supposed to be your supporters, if you have made it clear that you're going through something really serious

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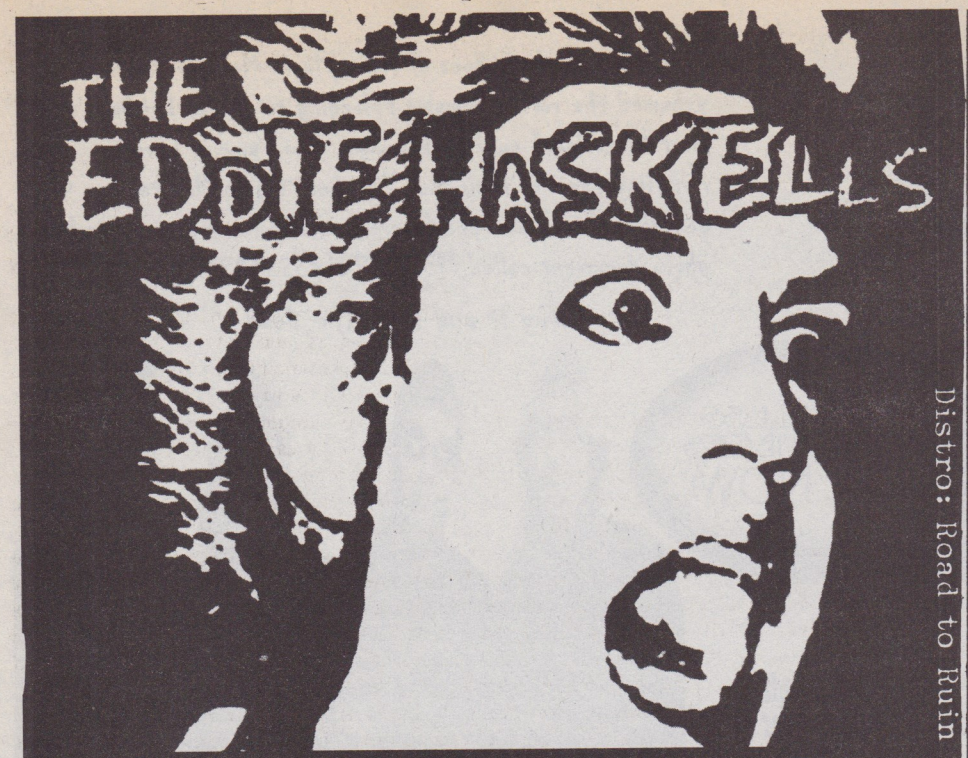

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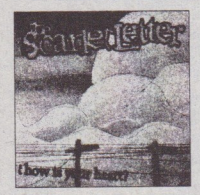

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and they are still not giving you the support you need, look for it somewhere else as soon as you can. You might want to stay at a friend's house or with family for a while until you have built up your strength a little. If you remain in a bad situation when you are experiencing a crisis, it can prolong the process and worsen the pain. You owe it to yourself to get through this smoothly and without guilt or resentment.

Try to see your experience as something necessary and natural, as a kind of wake-up call, an opportunity to make positive, fundamental changes in the way you live your life. After all, it takes a total annihilation to find out what is truly indestructible. Ask for what you need. Be honest. Let yourself feel it. You will make it through this.

If You Are Supporting a Friend

As a supporter, the most vital tool available to you is empathy. Try to bring yourself back to a time when you were struggling like your friend is struggling now. Remember how it feels to need support. You will need patience, and a clear idea of what you can and cannot do, which you must communicate to your friend.

It can get really hard and really scary; there will be times when you don't know what to do, or if there is anything you can do to help this person you care about so much. Do your support work in a team—this is the best way to preserve your own mental health, and it relieves a lot of pressure. You'll need breaks from the whirlwind, and time for caring for yourself. Meet with the other supporters and check in with each other: update one another on developments, discuss things that need to change. It can really help to be organized about this.

As a supporter, some of your responsibilities might include getting your friend to eat, go outside, get enough sleep, and take care of himself in other simple ways. A person who is living through a breakdown can't be expected to have healthy habits; as healthy habits will help him get through this, you might have to be the one who has them on his behalf, at least in the beginning. If your friend has made cards with advice on how to pull him out of despair, use them. You may need to take the initiative in getting your friend to see his counselor or go to yoga class. If he is on medication, make sure he takes his drugs at regular times each day; if he runs out, you may have to make an appointment with a psychiatrist for him. Approach his family or a friend who's known him for years and ask how they've dealt with situations like this in the past.

It is not appropriate for you to try to fix your friend—don't take away his agency like that. He has to fix himself, that's why he's falling apart in the first place. As a supporter, it is your job to create a safe environment for your friend to experience what he needs to, not to make his problems go away.

Try to restrain yourself from judgment. Focus on your empathy, no matter how hard it gets. When things are difficult, remind yourself of your love for this person, of everything he gives you when he is well enough to give. At the same time, be careful not to overextend yourself. You will do yourself, the person you're supporting, and everyone else in your life a disservice if you take on more than you can handle. The part you play in his well-being should be a gift you give, not a burden you shoulder. Stay open and be honest, with yourself and everyone else, about your needs and limits. Keep the lines of communication open, especially if you're nearing the end of your rope.

Medication

This is very sensitive subject among people dealing with these problems, particularly those of us who have been through the psychiatric system. Some feel that psychoactive drugs are purely an oppressive tool of the State, others have no doubt they would have killed themselves had they not gone on medication, and are grateful for it; still others reject the idea that they need drugs to maintain mental clarity and emotional stability, while acknowledging the ways drugs have helped them reclaim their lives. It's a complex issue, once best not portrayed in black and white terms.

It's true that psychoactive drugs are the first card drawn by the mental health industry, and often are seen as a suitable replacement for therapy, lifestyle changes, and other forms of healing. This is typical of the tendency in Western medicine to treat only symptoms, not addressing the root causes of problems. Many drugs can cause side effects: emotional numbness, liver problems, nausea, insomnia, fatigue. Every individual's response to a given drug is unique.

I believe medication is a potent tool to be used when appropriate and then discarded when no longer needed. The thing is, you have to work on healing if you ever want to get off medication. I've been told repeatedly by therapists and psychiatrists that I am like a diabetic in that my brain doesn't produce certain chemicals I need to survive, so if I stop taking my medication the result will be the same as for a diabetic who stops taking insulin: I will die. Now that I have met people (including a diabetic, by the way!) who have used nutrition and a conscious lifestyle to regulate their various chemical imbalances, I know that it is possible to live without my drugs, and I am developing a program to end my dependence upon them.

No one is entirely sure how most psychoactive drugs work. Psychiatrists will tell you, for example, that some regulate the levels of serotonin in your brain; how, they don't know. One thing I can tell you from personal experience is that the drugs called SSRIs (Selective Serotonin Re-uptake Inhibitors) are bad news. They have a way of deadening people, whitewashing their emotions, drastically altering their personalities. Their effects are very hard to predict. A few of the most common SSRIs are Prozac, Celexa, Zoloft, Effexor, Lexapro, and Paxil (which has a page-long list of side effects and withdrawal symptoms, including "electric-feeling shocks throughout the body" and "scratching sounds within one's head"). Keep in mind that almost every name-brand drug also has at least one generic version, so if you're being prescribed medication be sure to ask your doctor if the drug is an SSRI. If it is, ask for something else.

Wellbutrin has worked really well for me when I've needed it. It's not an SSRI and it doesn't numb me or sap my energy the way Prozac did. I liken it to a pair of water wings: it keeps me afloat just enough to prevent me from drowning, and I have to do the rest of the work on my own. If I'm taking my medication, I don't have to worry that I'm going to collapse on the floor thinking the walls are closing in on me, or hear voices in my head telling me to kill my lover, or become consumed by a delusional panic, certain that at any moment I'm going to die and anyone who touches me will die too. It took feeling things like that every day for a few weeks for me to agree to go back on my medication, just to stabilize. It was one of the best decisions I ever made. It came from a place of self-preservation, the closest I could get to self-esteem.

I've been on Wellbutrin for a little over a year now, and have experienced no side effects. I still get depressed, I still feel all my emotions. The difference is that instead of focusing all my energy on desperately keeping myself alive, I can step back, just a little bit, and allow myself to live.

So how do anarchists with no money get prescription drugs? I can think of a few ways. The first is to ask a trusted supporter who has a job that provides health insurance if she will help you hoodwink a psychiatrist. Get to know the details of her coverage and make sure the company will pay for psychoactive drugs before you do anything else. You'll need to know how much the deductible is (how much your agent will have to pay the doctor or pharmacist before the insurance company picks up the bill), and have this money available. Send your agent, insurance card in hand, to a psychiatrist or psychopharmacologist to report that she has been having problems. For all intents and purposes, she will be impersonating you. Coach your agent in advance about what kinds of problems you are having, including how much sleep you've been getting, how your moods have been fluctuating, what emotions you've been feeling, what you've been eating and how much, how you've been behaving socially, how well you've been able to concentrate, how you've been performing in a work environment, and how long this has been going on. You need a pretty specific set of circumstances to pull this off; it may sound far-fetched, but I know it can work because it's what I do to get my medicine.

Another idea is to get on Medicaid, or whatever public health plan is available in your state, assuming any are. You might be able to get help at a free clinic or community mental health center. f none of these resources are available to you, public hospitals have psychiatric walk-in clinics and emergency rooms (see Health Care), and some have crisis teams who will send a social worker or psychiatrist to your home.

Counseling

I believe in counseling—I believe in teachers and healers, and these are the roles served by a good counselor. It is strange to have a person in your life with whom you share the most intimate details of your life, to whom you expose the most frightened and broken and cruel places inside you, but with whom you have no outside social contact whatsoever. However, this can make the work you do together feel safer than it would if you were confiding in a friend. There are things I can talk about with my counselor, suicide being an example, that would be too loaded to discuss with many of my friends or any of my family. The sense of responsibility is different than in other relationships: if you stand up your counselor, you are not letting her down, only yourself. The relationship is entirely focused on you and your healing, so you don't have to fear that you are demanding too much.

My counselor is an amazing person. She listens to me, really listens. She doesn't let me get away with anything, but she never makes me feel attacked or violated. She's a queer mother who identified as an anarchist before I was even born! And she's connected to an entire community of healers and old-school activists that I never even knew existed. She works on a sliding scale, as many good counselors will, and has a really sharp critique of the psychiatric industry and all its exploitative tendencies—and she treats me with respect, as a peer.

In this society, we're never taught how to care for ourselves physically, mentally, emotionally, or spiritually. Healing is a skill we have to learn. We can wing it, teaching ourselves as so many anarchist musicians and bike mechanics have, but the stakes are higher. For those of us who suffer from serious chemical imbalances like manic depression, or are trying to recover from intense traumas like sexual abuse, the risks we take when we strike out on our own as if we already know how to heal wounds this deep are serious indeed. Counseling can equip us with tools to use in our own self-guided healing processes.

Accept Yourself

Here's a crazy idea: what if all your problems, your manias and phobias and dysfunctions, are actually natural, healthy reactions to a manic, paranoid, dysfunctional world? What if you are not messed up after all, but totally normal, and the hard things you are feeling are exactly what you are supposed to be feeling? Rather than enthroning your problems as permanent fixtures in your life, accepting yourself in such a way can actually help you feel more capable of self-determination and transformation. Besides, who says that everyone has to be the same to be healthy, that mental health is a one-dimensional standard by which everyone can be judged? The idea that you are flawed, that you are crazy while everybody else is sane, can be paralyzing; it also sounds suspiciously like capitalist propaganda.

Talk of so-called self-improvement can reinforce the feeling, so prevalent in this society, that who we are and what we have is never enough. It's possible to become obsessed to an unhealthy degree with taking better care of yourself, being in better physical shape, doing better introspective work, becoming a better communicator. The harder you press yourself, the further these ideals seem to recede before you. As in dieting and bodybuilding, the pursuit of perfect mental health can degenerate into self-abuse.

Just as writers, painters, and musicians experience creative blocks, all of us have times when we feel lost and jaded. Everything waxes and wanes; that natural pattern governs our lives just as it does the moon and ocean. If you feel stagnant, the worst thing you can do is dwell on your perceived insufficiencies until you have entrenched yourself in total hopelessness. When something isn't working, don't beat yourself up about it; accept that it's not working for the time being, and focus on something else.

Sometimes the most healing thing you can do is simply be still, be present and in your body without any goals or intentions or pressures. Through the eyes of our competitive culture, this can look like indolence, but in truth, it's impossible to do nothing. Even if you're laying down, not thinking or hatching plans or dreaming, things are still shifting and growing inside you. Sometimes what you need is to regenerate, to let yourself rest and revive, and this can be as conscious a process as yoga or therapy or writing.

The Healing Revolution

Ultimately, mental health, like freedom, desire, culture, and everything else, is not produced individually, but by entire civilizations. No one can be wholly sane in an insane world. Just as queer sexuality isn't limited to those who identify as gay, discussion of mental health should not be limited to those who identify as mentally ill; it concerns all of us, for everyone is a bit crazy. Treating mental health issues as identity politics, as if it were only a question of how the "normal" majority should take care of the mad minority, creates a false dichotomy; in truth, we all can benefit from self-care and self-healing.

If any of us are to heal, we have to heal our damaged, destructive society. Though it can be unhealthy to fixate on self-improvement, we have to be careful to provide for our own emotional health and well-being in the process of fighting the system that undermines these. Capitalism is characterized by an inhuman emphasis on productivity and efficiency; naturally, we internalize this, and it infests our personal lives and dreams and political projects. Overworking ourselves in our struggles to abolish work, disregarding each other's needs in the heat of our battles against the heartless establishment, we replicate the virus of self-destruction in our efforts to eradicate it.

Revolution is fought on two fronts, one outside, one inside. We won't be able to overthrow capitalism until we heal ourselves and each other, and we won't be able to finish healing ourselves and each other without overthrowing capitalism. Don't mistake the struggle in the streets for the only struggle, or misunderstand the time we must take to nurture ourselves and one another as a distraction from it. Healing is a form of revolution, just as revolution is a form of healing, and doing what it takes to heal yourself can be truly revolutionary.

While the crusties drank to SKITSYSTEM at Gilman and Carl grew his beard at Burning Man, most metalheads in town submitted themselves to as many days of doom metal as their pasty legs could stand during the Three Days of Darkness Festival that happened during the hottest weekend of the year here in San Francisco—Sept. 3, 4, and 5. What follows is my take on the goings-on of this massive metal occasion.

Friday night was the first of the fest, featuring mostly local bands, and I have nothing at all to say about it because I missed it completely. The bands were: BOTTOM, NIGHT AFTER NIGHT, DIRTY POWER, YOB (from Portland), and headliners ACID KING. Word was that YOB was particularly good.

On Saturday, the "Southern Lord Night," we missed LAIR OF THE MINOTAUR. The first band we caught was Arizona's GRAVES AT SEA, which was also my favorite of the night. Churning like a heavier, slower EYEHATEGOD, they were of course extremely heavy and impressively tight while playing extremely slow. The singer did this speaking backward thing between songs, which was more than a little cheesy but effective and entertaining enough. He also started bashing himself in the forehead with the mike at one point, bloodying his face up a bit. I initially assumed it was just for show, except that he did it during a pause in the song so that the blows to his face were perfectly in time with the music before and after. I'll give him the benefit of the doubt that this was intentional. Good stuff all around.

Next up was the entire THRONES band, consisting of Joe Preston and his malfunctioning pedals. Joe had a bit of an off night, but it was worth it to get to watch the people in attendance try to nod their heads in time with Joe's completely asynchronous drum machine accompaniment. You gotta feel for the guy—someone ran off with a bunch of merch out of his van, plus I heard that his hard drive crashed recently, erasing all the drum programming he's used on all his songs throughout the years. After a typically majestic rendition of his perennial closer, "Obolus", Joe concluded the set with a hefty heave of his bass into the back wall in disgust. Hope the next night with HIGH ON FIRE went better.

So then we had the band that I think most people, myself included, were most jazzed to

see—KHANATE. Comprising such revered members of the doom elite as James Plotkin, of OLD, PHANTOMSMASHER, and innumerable side projects, and Stephen O'Malley, of BURNING WITCH and SUNN O))), KHANATE were the sort of band that the Fest was built around. I don't think they tour much, if ever, so to be able to see this group, which has been steadily working its way to the forefront of the post-EARTH doom/drone scene, perform live was something I didn't want to miss. Unfortunately, what I came away with after their performance was that extreme doom as a genre translates poorly to the live experience. Plotkin's work of recent years has focused primarily on ambience, and the likes of EARTH, SLEEP, CORRUPTED and SUNN O))) set the precedent that metal, when stripped bare to a single undulating riff, slowed to a crawl, and expanded over the course of the better part of an hour, can still result in a powerful listening experience that approaches "ambience."

KHANATE, I'd say, didn't quite make the grade. Like the polar opposite of death metal guitarists and grindcore drummers, the purveyors of doom seem intent on the pursuit of the all-time slowest playing possible, and in KHANATE's case, any semblance of a song or even a riff was lost. We need only look to the classic EARTH 2 album to see that 30-minute droning heaviness need not sacrifice a decent riff. KHANATE's entire set consisted of maybe two "songs" that seemed all build-up that never led to anything. Randomly hitting the open E with ten-second intervals between drum hits does not result in the most captivating listening experience. My attention was held for the first 20 minutes or so, but after smelling an acute case of emperor's new clothes, I found myself wishing for that final feedback ring.

Finally, we had GOATSNAKE. Man, I really will never be able to understand what the big deal is with this band. Perhaps there are legions of SCREAM or (less plausibly) WOOL fans, who still can't get enough of Pete Stahl's warble, but Christ I find his voice irritating. His goofy "hey brah, it's cool" rock 'n' roll stoner/surfer swagger was pretty unbearable as well, as was his insistence on using a tambourine on just about every song, and I won't even mention the maracas. Oh, whoops. The rest of the band sports the impressive pedigree of Greg Anderson (of SUNN O))) and previously ENGINE KID) on guitar, the bassist from KYUSS and the drummer of THE OBSESSED, so musically they were decent enough heavily de-tuned stoner rock, but man, those vocals weren't doing it for me. SCREAM fans of MRR—tell me what I'm missing.

Day three was by far the most varied day of the festival, this one featuring a dozen bands spread throughout as many hours, starting at two in the afternoon. I missed the first two bands, DRINK THE BLEACH and HIGH TONE SON OF A BITCH, but I did manage to nab DRINK THE BLEACH's demo and I'll take a minute here to say a few good words about it. I know virtually nothing about them save that they're local and that their four-song demo was far better than I expected. Completely solid and rocking stoner metal—not too cheesy or groovy or straightforward "rock," just interesting song-writing, catchy riffs, and mean vocals. Really good stuff—I look forward to hearing more.

The first band of the sweltering hot day for me then was a band I've been hearing about for a little while now and was very glad to finally see, WOLVES IN THE THRONE ROOM, from Olympia, WA. In addition to having the best band name in recent memory, these guys also manage the formidable task of writing epic ten-plus-minute songs of raging black metal with lengthy quiet intros that don't lose the listener's attention. The drummer must've lost a few pounds in the course of their set, blasting for minutes at a time in the torrid midday heat of the club (Studio Z). The poor guy looked like he was barely holding on. I also picked up their demo (4 songs, 42 minutes), and let me say, I am generally not a fan of black metal, but this shit fucking destroys. Prospective label upstarts take note: this is definitely a band to watch. The songs have numerous changes, more riffs than god, relentless speed, and technical proficiency. I actually thought of *Justice*-era METALLICA if played by say, DARKTHRONE. A definite favorite of the whole fest for me—get in touch with them at wolvesinthethroneroom@hotmail.com.

Next up were three local bands, but we opted to eat burgers instead of seeing one of them, SUBARACHNOID SPACE. But BRAINOIL and IMPALED played impressively solid sets. I've been listening to BRAINOIL's self-titled LP on Life is Abuse a fair amount lately and their powerful playing certainly didn't disappoint.

As for IMPALED, I must admit I wasn't too excited about seeing them again, but then I forget that every time I see them, they end up being great. With a huge crowd before them, impaled skeleton props beside and a "deth" metal spelling bee mid-set, the lab coat-clad band executed some near-perfect CARCASS imitation and put on a killer show the whole time. It's always refreshing (and rare) to see a metal band act like they're genuinely enjoying themselves while playing, and IMPALED managed to be entertainingly tongue-in-cheek and face-rippingly brutal at the same time.

At this point, clearly the death metal portion of the afternoon was well underway, and carrying on the baton was the mighty MISERY INDEX from Baltimore, MD. These guys have been a favorite of mine ever since the core of the band splintered off from DYING FETUS a few years backs. One of the few overtly political death metal bands, the singer of MISERY INDEX has been seen sporting TRAGEDY t-shirts and a look at their lyric sheet shows a definite interest in punk-related topics. Their recorded output thus far—the *Overthrow* EP, the *Retaliate* full-length, and splits with STRUCTURE OF LIES and COMMIT SUICIDE—has been some of the most intense death/grind ever recorded. Sadly, the band didn't quite duplicate this tonight. I'll chalk up a lot of my misgivings on Sunday to shitty sound in Studio Z but, though it may be obvious, I hold too much stock in bands' drummers, and it's true that their new drummer just doesn't measure up to their original, the inimitable Kevin Talley of DYING FETUS fame—one of the hardest-hitting, fastest drummers ever. Still not bad, but only a fraction of the power they possess was displayed.

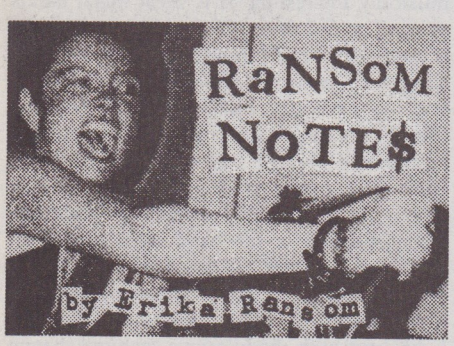
After chatting with Will on the sidewalk for a minute and seeing how he was enjoying his first metal festival, we headed back in to see my easy favorite of the fest, CEPHALIC CARNAGE. My old pal Devon once levied the justifiable criticism about metal that although it's musically interesting, live, most metal bands are dull as dishwater. CEPHALIC CARNAGE is always the band I think of as being the most exceptional exception to this rule, and tonight was no exception. Even with horrendous sound—the chaotic grind parts were an incomprehensible blur of bass—CEPHALIC humbled every performance of the fest and the crowd went positively apeshit in response. Every member of the band went nuts from note one, yet their execution was flawless. I especially liked the guitarist playing impossibly technical riffs behind his head. The highlight came with the hilarious costume change mid-song on "Black Metal," when the band switched from goofy home-made corpse-paint masks to the ubiquitous mesh trucker hats so favored by stoner rock bands currently. I'm not sure if most of the audience got the joke, and for those that did, it may've struck a tad too close to home, but trust me, it was funny. I'd highly advise seeing these guys if they come through your town.

It was inevitable that the show would go downhill after this. ASUNDER and ASVA both played agonizingly slow doom, the latter even more than the former, basically at KHANATE non-tempos. OLD GRANDAD and HIGH ON FIRE closed the show but I left well before them. I couldn't believe how many people were in the room for ASUNDER. I mean, props to them for being in demand, and they are a talented band, but really, some of those 15-minute songs started to drag, and I found myself wondering just what in the hell everyone was looking at as the whole crowd stood motionless for an hour staring forward. ASVA was more interesting only because I kept assuming that the venerable Trey Spruance of MR. BUNGLE fame was going to break into something of note, but nope: hit the open E, let ring for thirty seconds, repeat...The singer of LUDICRA joined them for half their set, which was a plus, but when the set ended I couldn't help but think, "that's it?" a feeling that gave me déjà vu of KHANATE's set the night before.

But shit, don't listen to me—my favorite record this month was a parrot-singing death metal band (more on that next month). I want to say, after I've finished talking shit on some of these bands, I was happy that I got a chance to see them all and the show as a whole was a lot of fun and a huge success and effusive accolades are due Matt Shapiro and the Lucifer's

Hammer crew for the months of work leading up to it. My main reservations with it were simply personal taste issues, so if you're at all interested in seriously heavy sounds you might want to check these bands out for yourself.

I'll most likely return to more general record/demo/scene reviews next month unless something more interesting comes my way, so if you're a band or label on the grind or metal side of things, feel free to submit your records for critique at: 701 Broderick St., San Francisco, CA 94117, c/o Elliott Lange, or e-mail at cromlaughs@hotmail.com. See you next month.



Sharks on Election Day

This election is coming on like a car crash. Here I am, typing from my third-story apartment in Boston, sitting near the window. The sounds of traffic waft up from the busy street below. From a distance there is the sound of a loud engine going way too fast, building speed down the straightaway. Then, a sharp squeal of tires as the light suddenly changes, or someone comes out from a side street. There is an inevitable warm sickening sound of metal smashing, the crunch of broken glass. A long silent pause, then a moment later sirens begin to wail. The ambulance is on its way, and I wonder, as my neighbors do, if anyone is dead on the pavement.

I've waited until the very end, the November issue of MRR, to make up my mind. The question on the table, surrounded by ink on all sides, written about in every radical and punk zine over the last year, is the upcoming presidential election. The debate, for the most part, hasn't been Bush vs. Kerry—but whether to vote at all.

You have probably read or debated or written yourself about the lack of democracy in America. How these two choices we're given are not really choices at all. It's like betting on black or red on a roulette wheel of corrupt politics—either way, the house wins. Many people feel, and rightly so, that voting for a "lesser evil" is wrong. They don't want to give their approval to any candidate who will support war and perpetuate the current system of exploitation, which both candidates are sure to do. Voting, in this situation, is a farce, a sham, and a buy-in to a corrupt system that will win no matter who is elected.

But balance this fact with the need to kick George W. Bush out of office. In only four years, he has declared war on two countries. He has attacked civil and environmental rights and gutted the national treasury in favor of State control, the fabulously wealthy, right-wing Christians, and corporate profits. These are not trivial issues, or little details—they are matters of life and death! Bush's domestic and international crimes are well recorded. In the history books there is a library of his misdeeds, and in the streets there is an angry marching column of millions, each a voice that can attest to his wicked policies! Go, Erika, go!

Yet with all this waste and suffering attributed to Bush, I still cannot bring myself to endorse the leading opponent, John Kerry. If elected, Kerry would perpetuate most of the same policies, and he supports the same system as Bush. Nor can I get excited about supporting groups like punkvoter.com or the Democratic Party. For me, they are all missing the point. Almost half a million people marched in New York City against the Republican National Convention, calling to get Bush out of office. That was important, and builds momentum for change, but until people are calling to get rid of presidents altogether, demanding to create something new, we will not get very far.

Emma Goldman said it very well: "Corruption of politics has nothing to do with the morals, or the laxity of morals, of various political personalities. Its cause is altogether a material one. Politics is the reflex of the business and industrial world, the mottos of which are: 'To take is more blessed than to give'; 'buy cheap and sell dear'; 'one soiled hand washes the other.'" Both men are candidates who, if elected, will represent not the interests of people, but the interests of profit.

So, with these thoughts, what to do on Election Day? Will I vote? It has been a hard decision for me. On one hand, I am anxious to get Bush removed from office. On the other, I hate to participate in this current system that only creates the *illusion* of popular choice and democracy. After much internal debate, and to the consternation of my anarchist comrades, here is my reply.

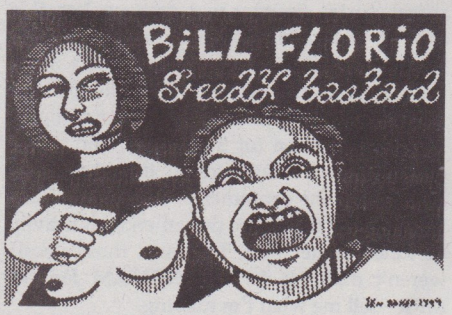
First, observation and daydreams. Recently, while looking though a photo book, I discovered that I smile like a shark. Especially when someone tells me to smile when I don't feel like it. My lips pull back into thin lines, revealing gums and a mouthful of teeth. My eyes focus on the camera as if to say, *I could eat you alive.* And, with all those teeth, I just might! During a daydream while thinking about the election, I pictured myself as a smiling shark. Both Bush and Kerry were floating in the ocean with no boat or help in sight, just two bobbing heads above the waves. Would they both still be wearing ties? And little American flags on their lapels? I was a huge great white shark, circling the two men, smelling blood. What would they say, with no speeches prepared beforehand? No fighter pilots at their command? I was a hungry shark, but taking my time before the strike. My *choice* was which to eat first. With a wide smile full of teeth, I gained speed, slicing through the water. Soon, Kerry was swimming nervously all alone. That is what voting will mean to me. One more capitalist reduced to fish food. One target down.

Yes, I have decided to vote, but with my eyes wide open, not confused by slogans and empty promises. I see voting as another tool at our disposal, and to ignore or dismiss it is foolhardy to say the least. George Bush needs to be sent back to the ranch! And with the propaganda machine running high, he just might win another four years of blood and tears. I don't want to see that happen, and my vote is *against Bush.*

However, if Kerry wins, I have no plans to let him rest easy. Fuck, no! My choice is not who I want to be president, but who to give hell to for the next four years. I will curse, and pull down a lever, looking ahead to the continuing fight. Since the beginning of this country, people's struggle for real freedom has never ended, or started, with Election Day. I am not blinded by any notion that this election is "democracy in action," but nor am I deaf to the suffering that George W. Bush has caused during his presidency. Kerry is by no means a solution, but even if the changes were modest, he would be an improvement over the current situation. I also think it is hypocritical to demand change and then not use this opportunity, however small, that is at our disposal. It seems that most of the people who refuse to vote, on the high moral ground that they don't want to be involved with the government, already are. Most people pay taxes, an action much more intimate with the State, and more directly harmful, than voting. I don't mean to be harsh in my criticism, but it's hard for me to swallow that line of reasoning, other than that not voting is much easier (and safer) than not paying taxes. Of course if you feel that voting will somehow be giving in to the Man, and will harm your soul, by all means, don't do it!

We will see what happens. If you decide to vote, don't go into the booth like another sheep to the slaughter, believing Kerry or Bush has your interests at heart, because obviously they don't. Vote like a shark. And don't forget, this doesn't end on Election Day!

In Solidarity and Blazing Guitars, Erika Ransom



A year or two ago I made up this clueless quiz. I listed 30 or so general knowledge references and asked people if off the top of their heads they had some inkling of what they were. It wasn't really a test of intelligence; it was just to see where people were at when it came to pop culture. I mean, you can watch that stupid 80s show where you can see Scott Ian from ANTHRAX and Henry Rollins pre-

tending to be experts on Care Bears and the TV show *ALF*, but the point of my stupid quiz was to see what type of person soaks up information and what type stores it somewhere between that last joint and that last game of Halo.

So you got to wonder what the average showgoingrecordcollecting type thinks about when picking out what sort of punk rock to listen to. Now there are some people that seem to genuinely like all music and don't get all jaded and pissy about what kinda crap they let in their ears—most of these folks are at least two to three times older and usually are down for hitting on anyone at a show. The rest of us have this notion of the perfect band in their heads that everything is compared to. It may not be an actual band; it may be a supergroup of different members of your favorite bands; but nonetheless if the hopes are at the highest, there is a chance that a couple of bands will meet this expectation.

A lot of you folks think I am very jaded when it comes to music. I've seen it all, I threaten people by smirking at them, etc., etc. But this is far from true; in fact, it doesn't take very much to impress me. It's just that no one does. Most of you have some really lame-ass ideas of what a good punk band is. Yeah, Stiv Bators may look cool in some bootleg video barely standing up holding on to the mic stand, but ya know what—you're not him. And that was starting to get old 30 years ago.

Anyhow, you ask people what they really want in a punk band. But when you really break it down, most of the answers aren't possible.

"Oh, I like bands that are really angry or really emotional." Hey, when you practice the same damn song 100 times and play it like 200 times, any emotion you had writing it is long gone. Sure, you can put on an act, but pretending to be all emotional about playing a song is dumb, unless yer so over the top it's silly.

"Oh, a band should be really tight and together"—to tell you the truth, bands that are really tight and together usually are too bored to play punk rock or anything close to it. Maybe they can do it for a year or two, but then someone ultimately gets bored and the band breaks up or turns into some putrid jackoff party. There are exceptions—usually bands that don't try to do it all the time. I think THE DESCENDANTS probably fall into this category, where ALL falls into the jackoff party category. But a really tight band that can crank out more than one good album, is awesome live, and can keep it going all year round is almost impossible.

"I like bands that make a profound sociopolitical statement." Hey, if you want to that kind of thing, you should shit out your window, not pay your taxes, or hang someone from a tree. Bands only jump on this wagon because there are people gullible enough to think that it matters. Sorry! Boring!

When yer working with electronics there's a simple circuit analysis called Thevenin's Theorem where you reduce a piece of electronics to a power source and a single resistor. A good band should be able to be reduced to a five-word description and you should still want to see them play. You know, like when you make a flyer and you know no one has heard of this band but you really need to get everyone to see them. This five-word description is called shtick. The thing that makes it great is not using the same five words as anyone else.

SHAVED HEADS, YELL, NO DRUGS
FAT GUYS DRINK, BLOW FIRE
TATTOOED FACE THROWS POOP NAKED
SHORT ELVIS SINGS ABOUT HALLOWEEN
DISCO QUEEN BOYS THROW BURGERS

Anyhow, most of those bands you can figure out pretty quick. But who are the most popular bands nowadays?

EX SKACORE TURN STUPID THUGS
PITTSBURGH SUCKS, AS DOES BAND
SILLY SONGS, FAKE FAST BEAT
BEARDED GUYS BORE YOU SILLY
BOSTON POGUES BEAT YOU UP

So I'm gonna go into two great bands I've seen in the past month.

CALIFORNIA JEWS PARODY RACIST SKINHEADS

JEWDRIVER—what a brilliant concept. Really all you have to do is say the name and anyone with a clue instantly know what it's gonna be about. But JEWDRIVER does us one better. Sure, they parody SKREWDRIVER songs, sure, they dress up like skinheads just enough for my mom to believe it maybe, but not anyone else (oh yeah, except for skinheads) and then they play totally loose and screwy; everyone's going in different directions and it's a brilliant mess.

And what happens? People keep coming back; those who are too dumb to realize that they're not an Oi band at all and those who want to see the first group make total asses of themselves. The truth is, even though they are a disaster, the songs are still pretty damn good. I just helped these guys play some shows on the east coast and it was amazing. This skinhead from Long Island walked up to them changing into their boots and braces next to my van and never caught the fact that they needed to change into their getups because they're not really skinheads. Naes is probably getting all anxious about me writing about this, but c'mon, if they didn't notice then, they ain't gonna read this now. Check it out at www.jewdriver.com

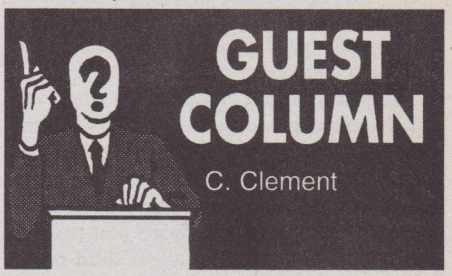
KNIGHTS IN ARMOR PRAISE JESUS

KNIGHTS OF THE NEW CRUSADE—OK, imagine that the Knights Templar form a garage rock band and sing songs like "Sympathy for Jesus," "My Way is the Highway," and "Ain't No Monkeys in My Family Tree." Now imagine them coming out on stage in full armor while their singer swings a real sword around and slays Satan and a guy in a pink gorilla suit. This is something you have to see! Check it out at www.crusadenow.com

So lemme tell you folks the secret to being a real punk rocker. A person who only thinks they are punk rock is either stupid and is gonna beat you up for this or that or thinks they can make up for their low brain activity by trying to prove to everyone how smart they are. A real punk rock person pretends to be stupid and then winks at you every once in a while to see if you'll notice.

Next month...20 ways to ruin a punk show. Hugs, bill@candids.com

Shemps will be ruling the west coast January 5 - 16 2005. www.theshemps.com Our CD is finally out too.



Capitalism Vs. Humanity Part 1
Or The Protection Racket

Hear ye, hear ye. All rise. The United States Court of Public Opinion is now in session. The somewhat honorable C. Clement presiding. Now hearing the People V. Insurance companies...

Opening Statement

What scares you? For most, the answer is losing everything you've worked so hard to accomplish and acquire or the costs associated with prolonged medical treatment. Valid fears, make no doubt about it, but, for the most part, fears that we've learned to deal with and prepare for. But out of these fears, an entire industry has sprung up to provide for us, planning compensation and protection. Unfortunately these companies are not exactly the salvation we were looking for. They have become, through the very practices they employ, a system far worse than the disasters they hope to alleviate. I'm referring of course to insurance companies.

They have grown out of their early 1900s multi-million dollar infancy into the current multi-trillion dollar juggernauts we all know. For the better part of the last century, these companies have succeeded in turning a profit by inspiring, and then exploiting the primal nature of humanity. They have worked tirelessly to grasp hold of every aspect of our lives, from property to life to health to the very core of government policymaking.

They offer up a dangerous game, one played with money, personal tragedy and human lives. Not unlike a casino, they roll out the red carpet, putting on a show of illusory benevolence in likely scenarios where all one has to do is call up their friendly insurance agent to be promptly compensated for their loss. Unfortunately these ideal scenarios are rarely ever played out in real life. Insurance companies have been known to fight tooth and nail to keep from having to honor policies, even going so far as to cross the line of criminal action, as the evidence will show.

So, ladies and gentlemen, I ask you to keep an open mind, reserve your judgments as I present the evidence against this industry of fear.

Exhibit One

There are various conflicting details, but all available source material seem to agree that during the mid 1930s several of the major American insurance companies dramatically increased the number of their representatives posted in Europe. These representative focused their complete attention to so-called "powder-keg regions" along the borders of the then xenophobic German state, selling policies covering life, home and property. No wrong-doing, just what those in business like to call "precision marketing."

Following the end of the Second World War and the ensuing exposure of Nazi concentration camps, thousands of families devastated by the holocaust turned to the insurance companies they had purchased policies from. What they found was that a great many of these companies had either been so-called "third-party" insurance providers, temporary insurance providers that had either gone out of business or vanished, taking their money and security blankets with them. Another common occurrence was that their insurers had failed to register their policies or even keep traditional records of the transactions. These "lost" or "misfiled" policies often amounted to millions of dollars that spent years in financial limbo, earning these companies interest with each passing moment. Some of the more legitimate insurers that were still operating offered up challenges of quite another variety for those seeking to receive their legitimate claims.

When policy records were produced, insurance companies required that official death certificates be produced in order for the families of the deceased to collect benefits. And while, in every other area, the Nazis were meticulous in their record keeping, they certainly couldn't be bothered with filing death certificates for the estimated six million or so Hebrews and German Jews murdered during the Holocaust, leaving many families without claim or recourse.

Now, whether or not this was a dedicated effort on the part of insurance companies to fuck over European Jews out of legitimate claims, or if it was just another case of pure capitalism winning out over compassion, there can be no question that these actions saved insurance companies from having to issue an estimated $2.46 billion dollars to policy holders. And far worse than that, we may never truly know just how many policies went unclaimed simply because there was no one left to lay claim to them, but we can be sure that those funds were absorbed by the insurance industry and used to further their expansion into new markets.

Exhibit Two

On Sept. 11, 2001, more than 2000 Americans lost their lives in the single most devastating terrorist attack in American history. For the insurers of the people and property affected, one that could have spelled the very end of the industry. How fortunate for them that they may still be the recipients of a government bailout, not unlike that bequeathed to the domestic aviation industry. However, unlike the aviation industry these companies not only appeared to be solvent prior to that day, but thriving. Is it any wonder that due to the attention America gave the people and place involved that they find themselves, for once, taking it on the chin?

With as much media attention as was focused of the events of that day and the impact to the people involved, policy holders were not about to allow insurance companies to slide as per usual and made every effort to maintain maximum media exposure on their plight. Fearful of the amount of possible negative publicity that their usual tactics were bound to generate, insurance companies moved quickly to settle claims by families of those lost in the World Trade Center complex and Pentagon attacks.

The real story of insurance shenanigans lies in the property insurance of the World Trade Center complex. While the twin towers and surrounding buildings were insured to the hilt, insurance companies have exercised a small loophole in those policies that provided them an enormous savings. The insurance policies for the complex, split amongst 24 insurance companies, allowed that for any given "catastrophic occurrence" the leaser was allowed a maximum claim of $3.5 billion. By contending that each strike should be viewed as separate events unto themselves, the leaser of the twin towers was hoping to be entitled to double the maximum claim amount, $7 billion total, and thus alleviate all concerns over the financing of re-constructing the World Trade Center complex. But this was not to be as nine of the insurers challenged this in court claiming that the events of Sept. 11 should be considered a single event. After a three-month trial, a jury sided with the insurers, saving them a combined $1.08 billion and prompting six more of the remaining insurers to follow suit and although these verdicts have yet to be delivered

It's not my imagination,
I've got a rapier in my back!

There comes a time when a man can take no more. When the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune have penetrated his heart to the core, he cannot, nay, *will* not, stand idly by and watch his enemies dismember and dishonor his corpse. He must take arms against the sea of troubles and by opposing end them. What I am talking about, my dear readers, is *revenge*.

Flip through your record collection and simply take note of how many times a band names themselves, their album, or songs after good old revengin'. It's quite a popular motif in punk rock. From Black Flag to The Showcase Showdown, bands of all genres of punk and hardcore can agree on one thing; the need to right the wrongs done to them, whether it is by the hands of their parents, society, the system, the country of Norway, the liberal-run media, and in some cases King Claudius. In fact, Hamlet may be one of the first documented punks. He had all sorts of girl problems, came from a broken home, and lived in Denmark! Not to mention all the shit he fucked up. He seriously killed the shit out of Rosencrantz and Guildenstern. How punk rock is that? Later Hamlet would smoke a lot of opium and write some real trippy material about being a "family man" and "ruling you in the jungle." Regardless, he is just one of the many punks in a long line of punks, such as The Punisher and John Walsh, to practice the fine art of vengeance. And I think it is high time I joined in on the game!

Now, starting a life of eternal vengeance isn't easy to do when all your days have been spent being the nicest guy in the world. All my life I've made rational decisions based on seeing both sides of a situation, and more often than not, deciding to choose a path of compromise instead of bloody revenge. As you can guess, the rewards of this decision-making strategy have been meager at best. Keep in mind that revenge would not be difficult for a man such as me. I have no doubt in my mind that, if need be, I could utterly destroy my opponents through a series of calculated strikes. It would be like a sadistic chess match, although with much more blood and shitting of one's pants. I would not kill the person outright, though. Death would merely provide an escape.

So I am left with this conundrum; how is a man who has thus led a peaceful coexistence with his fellow men to start a life of vengeance? What stands between this life and a life of rabid vengeance, frothing at the maw with revenge? I believe it is only a thin plate of glass, and I plan on crashing through it. I will then pick up my armor-plated Hoover and vacuum a bloody trail of vengeance across America.

To add legitimacy to my campaign, I point you to Mantooth's Pyramid of Retaliation. If you can't find my pyramid in any of your textbooks, it is because our nation's education system is a farce and chooses to teach that malodorous *theory* of evolution instead of my scientifically proven *fact* of revenge. Abraham Maslow once constructed a similar pyramid which illustrated, in ascending order, human needs. At the top of the pyramid he placed the need for self-actualization and transcendence. Upon closer examination of Maslow's pyramid, I concluded that he was a douchebag. That's right—fuck you Abraham Maslow. Thus, I crossed out his top layer and simply wrote in "revenge." If I would have known social sciences were so easy, I would have begun bastardizing other bearded scientists' theories long ago. It tickles me pink to think of that old fuddy-duddy Maslow thrashing in his grave if he knew what I did to his precious pyramid.

Now that my quest had a scholarly backing, I decided to put my plan into action. I decided

to write a letter to the Secretary of Education for banning the teaching of Mantooth's Pyramid of Retaliation in our schools.

Dear Secretary of Education, you are a drooling buffoon. You should resign and abdicate your power to me. If my request is denied I will have you eating the remains of the mis-educated drones of this great republic out of dog bowls by the end of the week. And don't you know that being called a "secretary" is somewhat outdated? Why must you insist on living in the past? This is just one of the many things I will change when you step down from power and hand me the reigns of Education. Sincerely, Greg Mantooth

I sent a similar letter to the bigwigs of the Trojan condoms corporation for not honoring my request that their novelty "French Ticklers" be renamed "Freedom Ticklers."

Dear Prophylactic Fat Cats, I was at the pharmacy the other day refilling my prescription for REVENGE and I noticed that you have not yet renamed your novelty condoms from "French Ticklers" to "Freedom Ticklers." I simply do not understand why you would allow our great nation's libidos to fall into the hands of terrorists, or even worse, the godless French. I weep for the children. Sincerely, Greg Mantooth

But I think you can see the problem with this kind of life of vengeance. My former life of politeness did not make me many enemies. Thus I have decided to go into the Revenge for Hire business. I figure it will be a lot like that movie *Dirty Work*, although with a lot less laughing, much more sobbing, and significantly less directorial powers granted to the likes of Bob Sagat.

My first job, which I haven't even been hired for but will expect payment for, involves my good friend Ed. A few months ago Ed was attending a CURSED show here in Pittsburgh. The singer of said group noticed Ed was wearing a CROSSED OUT t-shirt and proceeded to forcibly disrobe Ed and promised to send him some demos or Freedom Ticklers or some other shit. Regardless, Ed has not received anything Mr. Chris Colohan promised. If Mr. Colohan does not deliver what he promised I will be forced to mount my armor-plated Hoover as mentioned above and take a ride up to Toronto and do something unspeakably evil. Pittsburgh is not that far from Toronto. But this will most likely not happen as 1) Chris Colohan flanked by his The Order of the Black Guard at all times, 2) my Revenge-vacuum is very slow-moving, 3) If I got up there, I would be distracted by the many varieties of delicious, yet mysterious, Bubble Teas Toronto has to offer. I guess I am not so good at this revenge thing. I think I'll stick to running my mouth.

ENDNOTES:

1) Previously I had not been including any contact information for you to send your witty retorts to. This is mostly because the internet has given pretty much everyone with rudimentary motor skills an opinion. I don't necessarily give a shit about those opinions, but if you really feel the need to let me know how much of a "fairy" I am, please do: gregory.mantooth@gmail.com

2) I am not, nor ever was, in CRUCIAL UNIT. Some clever folks on the internet assumed that since we are from the same town that I must be in the band.

3) The members of BRODY'S MILITIA and HELLNATION have joined forces and created JACKED UP ZEROS. Fans of either band will most likely lose their shit over this. They recently toured the east with VIVISICK and their show here in Pittsburgh was probably one of my favorites of this summer. Maybe they have some demos left: Jacked Up Zeros, PO Box 177442, Covington KY 41017, USA.

4) REVENGE is also a fucking awesome metal band. They have an LP pic-disk on Nuclear War Now Records called *Triumph. Genocide.Antichrist.* Buy it.

At first the enemy is foreign, alien, incomprehensible: to post-9/11 America, a nation founded by fundamentalist Calvinists, they were Afghans, Iraqis, Muslims in general. We locked them into places like Abu Ghraib and Guantánamo Bay and we threw away the key. Under these conditions—denied access to a lawyer, never charged with a crime, their names and locations hidden from family and the media—dismal treatment, including torture, was inevitable.

In a classic step in the devolution from democracy to police state, we ran out of foreigners to bomb and imprison. Our rulers were forced to look inward, among the previously protected class of United States passport holders, for new scapegoats. Like their brethren at the naval base in Cuba, these Americans are being deprived of their most basic human rights. They are people who dare to pick up a sign and march against Bush Administration policies such as the war against Iraq.

Media accounts of massive protests against the Republican National Convention, which involved some 500,000 people ranging from leftists to pacifists to mainline Democrats in New York, focused on attacks on the police and GOP delegates. "The most damaging act of violence, in fact, appeared to occur against a police officer, who was kicked as he lay on the ground," reported *The New York Times*. "In addition, there were the demonstrators who consistently and at times aggressively badgered delegates, telling them in unprintable words that they ought to leave Manhattan posthaste."

Intentionally ignored and claiming far more victims were the shameful arrests of marchers by the NYPD between Friday, August 27 and Thursday, September 2.

Recognizing that political demonstrations are a fact of life in New York, police and marchers used to work together to ensure that peace prevailed. As a veteran of such rallies during the Reagan years, I remember shooting the breeze with cheerful cops between chants. We even helped them move barriers. In the rare cases when jittery police demanded that protesters clear a street—typically when some official was about to pass—they gave us every opportunity to leave. If you got arrested, you were given a "desk appearance ticket," or a release on one's personal recognizance, and released after a few hours.

Tensions escalated at the big anti-Iraq war demonstration in March 2003. Mounted police reared their horses to intimidate marchers with the threat of trampling. Cops ran through the streets pell-mell, arresting shoppers and tourists who hadn't been part of the march. New metal barricades were used to bludgeon and crush antiwar activists.

Beginning with a mass round-up of bicyclists at their monthly Critical Mass ride on the Friday before the convention, New York police arrested anyone they could get their hands on and confined them incommunicado under atrocious conditions for days at a time, prompting a local judge to fine the city for violating a New York rule that requires charging suspects within 24 hours or releasing them.

"The conditions of my arrest were pretty appalling," says Maria Cincotta, a 26-year-old New York teacher who was arrested on Tuesday night of convention week near Union Square. "We were given no order to disperse. Had I been asked to leave, I would have in a second." When Cincotta complained to police that her plastic handcuffs were too tight (other arrestees' hands turned blue) and asked for them to be loosened, they replied with a boilerplate "Sorry, we can't do that."

City officials converted a disused bus depot on the Hudson River's Pier 57 into what detainees nicknamed "Little Guantánamo" for its outdoor setting and maze of pens divided by chain-link fencing. Numerous arrest victims reported being denied food, water and access to an attorney or a phone. ("Sorry, I can't do that," police said.) Children, some who happened to be walking down the street when the cops arrested everyone present, were locked up for several days. Police refused to tell their frantic parents where they were. Adding to the misery was a resinous layer of gasoline and toxic cleansers coating the floor. "Everybody was laying in filth," said Cincotta. "Nobody was sleeping. A lot of people were screaming in agony." *The Times* reports that "scores" of RNC detainees contracted mysterious rashes and lesions.

Prisoners were shuttled between Pier 57 and the city's central holding jail in similarly dismal conditions. Wendy Stefanelli, a 35-year-old TV hair stylist, spent several hours locked in a hot bus—the weather was humid with temperature in the high 80s—with a man whose colostomy bag had burst. "He was throwing up all over the back of the bus," she said. "The entire bus begged the officers present to please get medical attention to this man. They completely ignored us."

"My experience wasn't nearly as bad as

other folks," says Jon Goldberg, 26, of Brooklyn. "There were people roughed up who were not resisting arrest. I saw one person with bruising on his head; he said a cop had kneeled on his head. A lot of people had their cameras destroyed. One had his photos deleted except for one, a new image of a police officer's boots and his hand protruding toward the lens, showing the finger."

Some police confirmed an illegal policy of intentionally delaying the release of demonstrators until the end of the RNC. "For disorderly conduct, they don't usually hold people," said Goldberg. "There was a deliberate attempt to get people off the street." Cincotta, the teacher, was ultimately released more than 48 hours after her arrest. I asked her what charge she faced. "I don't know," she said. "I never got to see a lawyer."

None of these Americans broke the law. Many were not even part of a political demonstration. Go ahead, call them whiners or hippies or commies or whatever retro-Nixon-era moniker you prefer. Turn the page or click the next URL. That's what your government wants you to do, because they're fresh out of Muslims to throw into prison. Someday, they'll be fresh out of liberal demonstrators too.

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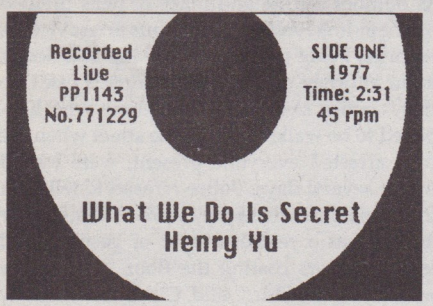
NEW BOOKS: WAKE UP, YOU'RE LIBERAL!: HOW WE CAN TAKE AMERICA BACK FROM THE RIGHT (Soft Skull Press, 336 pp., price $14.95), is out now, available everywhere. GENERALISSIMO EL BUSHO: ESSAYS AND CARTOONS ON THE BUSH YEARS (NBM Publishing, 208 pp., $19.95 hardback/$15.95 paperback) is also out. I'll be speaking and signing both books at stores across the United States during October; check my Rallblog at www.rall.com for details.



Dickless on a Friday Night

THE DICKS played their reunion gig at the Eagle Tavern in San Francisco last week. I missed it.

The Hammer Hits the Nail

L.A.'s The Flesh Eaters roar once again. Atavistic (www.atavistic.com) recently reissued of all the early tracks that first appeared on leader Chris D.'s Upsetter Records label, as well putting out a new studio release, *Miss Muerte*. Byron Coley, having been Chris D.'s most vocal proponent over the years, contributed elucidating liner notes.

The *No Questions Asked* CD has the earliest stuff, compiling their first LP of the same name (1980), their first, 4-song EP (1978), and their tracks from the classic L.A. punk compilation *Tooth and Nail* (1979). All of these records are quite rare, even with Chris D. having dredged up more copies in the late 80s. (Rumor at the time was that Chris had a drug habit that was calling.) Copies of the LP surfaced for about $15, the 45 was actually re-pressed (with a yellow inner label instead of white and a second generation picture sleeve), and copies of the compilation appeared with no printed inner sleeve.

No Questions Asked is dominated by the fast, thrashy, brittle early L.A. punk sound with the rare spazzed-out guitar solo (despite naming his label after Lee Perry's "Upsetter", Chris D. managed only one dub-influenced song, "Cry Baby Killer"). However, it is Chris D.'s histrionic "ripped throat" vocalizing, inventive phrasing, and imaginative lyrics transform the economic backdrop into remarkable music. Syllables are bleated without coming up for air, struggling to syncopate with the rhythm of the music with the constant threat of spilling over the lines. At times the songs sound almost as if they are skipping, as on "Home of the Brave", as couplets are staccatoed like a wounded typewriter. Lyrics are conceptual viscera, filled with imagery and wordplay.

"Disintegration Nation," the A-side of their 7" EP, bristles with energy and proves itself the high watermark of their early period. You get three versions to choose from here, with the 45 version, a demo version, and the prototypical Tooth and Nail version, then called "Version Nation".

After the *No Questions Asked* LP came out, the Flesh Eaters got signed to Slash Records for two great LPs, then returned to Upsetter for their *Hard Road to Follow*, reissued here in its entirety with a handful of extra tracks. It's less inventive than their first in its delivery, but Chris perfects his vocal yowl to a fever pitch, adds female counterpoint, and the instrumentation is tight as a drum. The result is a powerful punch in the gut and an essential bookend to the early Flesh Eaters era.

New for the band is "Miss Muerte", more than 25 years after their initial blast. Chris D.'s vocal delivery is diminished a tad (at times he sounds like Adam Sandler being strangled), the music is mid-tempo hard rock fare, and the lyrics struggle a bit for inspiration. Still, it is a decent record: the hooks are there, the energy still bristles, and it still is, after all, the inimitable Flesh Eaters. Check out www.flesheaters.com for more information about the band.

Gulcher Gulcher Goo

What happens when a few Midwest tards get together and start a band with nothing more than modest intentions? The result can be sheer brilliance, as with Bloomington Indiana's RED GLANCE, whose 1982 recordings have been issued as the *Swirls Away* CD on Gulcher Records. Leader Phil Hundley had a solo track on the 1981 Red Snerts Compilation and did some time as hey mr. tambourine man for the GIZMOS, but his vision gets realized with this band. Their simple sound belies top-notch songwriting. The title track evokes WIPERS with its somber minor chording. Hundley sings like a retarded Bryan Ferry on "When I Closed My Eyes", while "Valerie" is a slice of classic rock. Great stuff.

Proto hair band THUNDERTRAIN offers a hot live 1979 set on their Gulcher Records release, *Hell Tonite!* Great sound and a great performance transcend the cock-rocking genre of rama lama rock'n put-your-hands-together boogie to make for a truly bic-flicking good time. Cool cover of SLADE's "We're All Crazee Now."

Originally on MX-80 Sounds member Rich Stim's cassette label back in '85, "Accordion Pop" has been inexplicably reissued on CD. Solo artist Angel Corpus Christi is the conspirator; her unstoppable one-woman output might only be matched by Azalia Snail. With earnest covers of songs as wide-ranging as Roger Miller's "King of the Road" to the Velvet Underground's "Femme Fatale", the result, with no vocals or accompanying instrumentation, just straight accordion, is unnerving and soothing at the same time, bordering on an in-joke with no takers. Where things do get interesting is her old school mash-ups, one of which is John Lennon's "Imagine" and The Stones "Can't Always Get What You Want." Think about it.

Vampire City

Dennis Most and the Instigators (www.dennismostinstigator.com) further refine their hard rocking punk on "Vampire City", a full-lengther on the Trash 2001 label out of Germany. Sharing many of the same tracks as last year's *Wire My Jaw* CD on Dionysius, these are all new recordings with the latest incarnation of the Instigators. It's a burner from end to end, full of hot guitar licks, heavy heavy bass (courtesy of punk stalwart and keeper of the torch Keith Grave) and the Dennis' great snarling chops, culminating in the title track, surely one of Dennis' best-penned songs, a magnum opus power ballad that soars and burns into the brilliant chorus, "Everybody wants too much from me / Squeezing out those things that feed you / Closer now, let me feed you." Keep the torch lit!

Next month: Half Japanese, plus the six degrees of Zolar X. Send reissues of vintage punk for review to Henry, 601 4th St. #114, San Francisco, CA 94107, or email terasearch@yahoo.com

Only one presidential candidate has done all the following: 1) said he'd appoint anti-abortion judges to the Supreme Court 2) voted for Justice Scalia, the most obnoxious member of that court 3) promised to keep American troops in Iraq for at least 8 years 4) publicly supported The US entering Iraq to remove

Saddam Hussein. Oh yeah, besides him, there's George W. Bush.

—Marion Delgado

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How can we defeat them? They've got the money. They have the power. They have the influence. But I found the weak point. I drove my truck through a hole so big in the system that it will kill it. All they're concerned with is money. Lenin said, when it's time to hang the capitalists, they'll sell us the rope. They're throwing money at me. I am the rope.

—Michael Moore

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PART ONE: I sit in a park, on a wooden bench. In front of me, a picnic table, the finish worn off, provides the resting place for my computer. Tall maple trees shade me. Off to the side, a grey-bearded man in khaki shorts plays catch with his son. The boy wears a South College T-shirt. Next to me, a pair of extremely fat, white women watch the two males. They comment loudly about The Mets when father or son misses the ball.

In the distance, an American flag hangs limply over a small building that welcomes highway travelers to the State of Pennsylvania. Behind and above me, sparrows and cicadas compete in their mating calls. I think I'm getting sick.

I'm on the way to Philadelphia for Scott Beiben's Lost Film Festival. I've just popped one of those dissolving breath strips into my mouth. I love those things. They take the taste of the worst highway hell has to offer, and wipe it clear out of your mouth. Pow! They make you want somebody to kiss.

On the way to Philly, I stop at the famous Princeton Record Exchange. I try to hawk a couple ARTLESS CDs and the Board-Chomsky-Biafra spoken-word disk. I talk to a skinny guy with a scruffy face and shlubby shirt that screams *alternative*. This won't be an easy sale.

"I have a couple CDs," I tell him. "I wonder if you'd be interested in..."

"Consignment!" he shouts to the other side of the room. "Hey Jason, can you look at a couple consignments?"

Jason, a record store looking guy, with a heavy lower lip and an Alfred Hitchcock profile, waddles over to me with a long piece of paper in his hand. "Fill this out," he says, "and leave a few copies of each."

"I can't sell consignment," I tell him. "I'm only here for a few hours."

"We can only give you a buck a piece, then," he tells me.

Since it cost me more than a buck a piece to press the CDs, I pack up and get out. I'm discouraged. What happened to the stores that want to have everything? What happened to the guys who would take one just so they could have something new in stock? Things aren't like they used to be, I think, slipping another dissolving breath freshener into my mouth.

I arrive in Philly in the late afternoon. The festival is in an old, round building in the newly gentrified west side of town. The big round building, called The Rotunda, is one of the few left with any character.

On my way in, I pass a skinny guy about my height, wearing a Lost Film Fest T-shirt. He also wears light mid-calf shorts and sandals.

[Aside: What the fuck is it with sandals? Is this a throwback to beatnik-ism? If so, it's a throwback to the only thing *wrong* with the beatniks. Feet are ugly. Sandals are uglier. The worst are those rubber Wal-Mart shower sandals with the thong between your toes. Besides looking extremely painful, and difficult to keep on, they're hideous. I don't believe in the death penalty, but sometimes there are offenses that call out for it.]

Entering the Rotunda, my eyes take a few seconds to adjust to the dim light. I make out a few punk types slouched in folding chairs opposite the wall where the movies are projected. I sit down and watch the current movie. It's a documentary about something, I don't remember what. I pay more attention to the 10 or so people in the audience. A cute butch girl with a double-knobbed nose ring catches my attention. I don't catch hers. A few jock-looking white guys in basketball shirts and shorts sit in the back row. After a few minutes, they leave.

A Lost Film Festival. Free movies you can't see anywhere else. I come here from New York. Only half a dozen locals make the effort. It's sad.

I leave for a nearby hoagie shop where I gobble down a real Philly cheese steak—half the reason for coming to this city. Though the place looks authentic (I'm the only white guy in it), the food isn't so good. I can feel gas and effluvia bubbling in my stomach and pressing down against my brown spot. There's a gurgle. I make it to the bathroom, just in time. I'd sure hate to be the guy who uses this room next.

After wiping, I take one of the dissolving pastilles and fold it in quarters. These I insert into my anus. A tingle of pure sexual delight climbs up my rectum with minty freshness. Ah, I'm a new man.

I head back to the film fest.

As I sit there watching the film with a few other bored people, I feel a tap on my shoulder. It's the guy with the sandals.

"Are you Mykel Board?" he asks. "We met twelve years ago," he tells me. "I'm Scott Beiben."

Have I changed so little? Two hours twelve years ago and he remembers me? Maybe it's my Mykel Board T-shirt. That might be the giveaway.

Scott is with a filmmaker, a tall skinny blond guy who just graduated from school in Austin.

"You want to do an interview, Mykel?" asks Scott. He nods to the blond guy. "My pal here is making a movie about the Lost Film Festival."

"Naw," I say. "I hate doing interviews. I hate being in front of a camera. I'm too shy." Yeah, right.

"Where should I sit?" I ask. "Do you want me to play the intellectual, or the mean Brooklynite? What's my motivation?"

He frowns like he's missing a joke.

After setting up the camera, the blonde aims it at me. Then he asks, "What do you think about this?" He gestures toward The Rotunda.

"I'm discouraged," I tell him. "There's no one here. Free movies. A chance to learn, if not to act. I mean what the fuck?"

"Act?" he asks. "What should people be doing?"

"I would have had a different answer 30 years ago," I tell him. "But it's not like it used to be."

"People don't care," I continue. "You see it. Nobody gives a shit. We are powerless. There is absolutely nothing we can do. My advice to anyone under 40 is to *leave*. Vote with your feet. This country is full of money-grubbing folks who wouldn't give a shit if they destroyed everything. Well, not everyone. There are also the Christians, who *do* give a shit, and are doing everything in their power *to* destroy everything."

"Wait," he says, "are you saying there's nothing we can do?"

"Not quite," I tell him. "I'm saying what we can do is leave. Get out. Go away. The elections are fixed. And who's there to vote for anyway? It's useless, discouraging, a waste. Move to Mongolia, anywhere..."

I'm in rant mode. I spew my anti-American venom in bucketfuls. I talk about how any alternative, any chance of change is dead. A dozen people here. What does that mean?

"What it means," I tell him, "is nobody gives a shit."

After the interview, I wipe the spittle off my beard and stomp off. I go back to my Hertz, taking my laptop out of it. I begin to write this column, inventing the quote at the start of it. I add umph to my advice to "vote with your feet" and sharpen up my "there is no alternative" rhetoric. After working for an hour or so, I go back to The Rotunda where the films are.

When I return, the place is packed. There's a single free seat in back, near the projector. I sit in it. They're showing *The Bush Family Fortune*. It's the movie that inspired Michael Moore's *Fahrenheit 9/11*.

I didn't see *Fahrenheit 9/11*. It has nothing to tell me. I already hate Bush. What's it gonna do for me? Hearing about it pisses me off, though. It sounds racist. Like the Bush's are bad guys because their friends are Arabs.

"He was in bed with the Saudis," said my sister who previously boycotted French products because the frogs didn't support the Iraqi invasion.

My sister flies an American flag in front of her house. She's a gung-ho Israel Right-or-Wrong-er. What could get her to hate Bush? "He was in bed with the Saudis!" Oy vey.

I hate Georgie-boy as much as the next guy. I hate him because he's Christian with a capital C. I hate him because he's against the separation of church and state. I hate him because he invaded Iraq and killed a lot of people for oil. I hate him because the Patriot Act is the most evil piece of legislation since the anti-kiddieporn law. There are countless reasons to hate George W., but his dad liking Arabs is not

one of them.

I sit through *The Bush Family Fortune* though. It tells me how the Bush's manipulated the markets for their own financial benefit. How they fixed the last election. How they're pals with Arabs. I'm not feeling great about all this, but then it hits me.

This place is full. Every seat. They're listening to this, applauding at the right parts. I spot a particularly enthusiastic Negress in the row ahead of me. She's skinny with bright red hair. As she applauds, I can see her large hands with long, slender fingers.

The Bush movie itself pisses me off. You could make the same movie about *any* president. That's the way it works here. You're rich. You have connections. You get elected. La de da. The problem isn't Bush. The problem is: You're rich. You have connections. You get elected. La de da.

Though the film pisses me off, the audience doesn't. Young people. Older people. Negroes. Orientals. Whites. It's everybody. All kinds of people. They have an intelligent discussion after. They ask the director good questions, getting good answers. And there's an empty chair next to the Negress.

I change seats, bumping into the back of her chair as I move.

"Sorry," I say in my most innocent voice.

"That's okay," she says, flashing a wide-mouth smile framed in beautiful pink-purple lips.

"My name's Mykel," I tell her.

"Inez," she says, offering me one of her magnificent hands.

Greedily, I grasp it, holding it a second or two longer than you might in an everyday handshake.

After the Q&A, the group rises en masse to see the final movie, *The Corporation*.. The show will be outdoors, in a small park not far from The Rotunda.

I walk over there with Inez.

"You have great hair," I tell her. "That purple just dazzles. You ever come to New York?"

"Oh yeah, I work in Rochester," she tells me. "I work at a production studio in upstate New York. It gives free lessons to kids."

"Oh that's interesting," I say. "It's really noble of you to teach kids how to do media stuff."

"Oh no," she says, "I hate kids. I work in the archives."

I hand her á card for my NYC drinking group, "Drink Club".

"Oh," she says, "I'd like to join you, but I can't get into bars. I'm only 20."

I feel a stirring in my nether-region.

"Where are you staying?" I ask.

"I'm staying with Scott, the film fest organizer," she tells me.

By this time we've reached the park. The movie hasn't started yet. I find Scott in the crowd. And it *is* a crowd. Tons of people. Packed! These are all Americans, and they don't care about Nike. They care about doing something, or at least about knowing something. Yeah! Boy, is my interview gonna look silly. Boy, was I wrong. But fuck it. This is great.

"Yo Scott," I say. "Congratulations. This is really successful."

"Thanks, Mykel" he answers.

"Oh yeah," I say. "I don't really have a place to stay tonight..."

"No problem," Scott answers. "You can stay at my place. You may have to share a bed. Quarters will be tight."

"Don't worry," I tell him. "I like tight quarters."

After a hilarious screening of Scott and pals scamming Jerry Springer, the film begins. *The Corporation* is a depressing film about how corporations control everything. Maybe the most frightening scene is an interview with a "product placement in real life" marketing man.

He arranges for actors to go out on the street and ostentatiously drink Coke, or discuss a new CD or stack boxes from a client's company near the entrances to upscale buildings. He adjusts your reality to get out the corporate word. And they pay him well for it. It's scary.

I don't believe all of it, though. It is a propaganda movie, so it probably has its share of lies. The corporate spy, for example, looks much too hip and spiky-haired to be a corporate spy. Still, all in all it's depressing... until the end.

That's when the fighters come on. An Indian woman who has fought Monsanto, keeping genetically engineered seeds out of India. And Michael Moore, who may be the most important liberal in America. This is where he makes the statement I quoted at the start of this column. And there's applause when he says it.

Inez and I are lying on the grass watching the movie. I slide up next to her.

"It's all pretty inspiring, isn't it?" I say, looking at her perky breast pushing against the other side of a bright purple jacket. She's not looking at me, but at Michael Moore.

"I like it because it's not just another depressing *isn't-the-world-awful-and-there's-nothing-we-can-do* movie," she says.

Considering the crowd, the movie, the spirit of complete strangers becoming instant friends, and the sleek Nubian next to me, the world doesn't seem so awful at the moment.

After the movie, the crowd slowly disperses. People gather around Scott to congratulate him on his efforts. Eventually, Inez and I, along with a bunch of other assorted temporary homeless, find ourselves at Scott's house. It's cramped, and as filthy as every other punk house.

As it draws late, one by one, Scott's guests go off to bed. Inez and I are the last ones awake.

"There's only one bed left," says Scott. "I hope you two don't mind sharing it."

"I'd rather not," I say, "I prefer sleeping alone." Sure, that's what I said. Yeah, right.

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PART 2: Okay, I'm more optimistic than I was. People are doing things. Even if Bush steals this election, and I'm guessing he will, it's inspiring.

Not perfect though. It never is. A well-meaning group called Punk Voter (www.punkvoter.com) runs a full-page ad in Clamor Magazine. The ad says Kerry "has made it clear that he will appoint pro-choice judges." That is not true. Kerry has said he might appoint anti-Abortion judges. I emailed the group to complain. Their answer: *if you're pro-Bush then say so.*

"I'm not pro-Bush. I'm pro-truth." I tell them.

On the street here in NY, I see a kid with a badge that says "Nobody died when Clinton lied" I want to punch him in the balls. Did he forget Clinton bombed Afghanistan to take the heat off his impeachment hearings? LOTS of people died.

What is it with Clinton lately? Suddenly, he's the darling of girls, homos, and Negroes. Are we talking about the same person? Yoo hoo! This is the Bill Clinton who signed The Defense Of Marriage Act. That's a federal law that says the same thing as the homo amendment pushed by George Bush. This is the same Bill Clinton that signed the "Welfare Reform" bill, which forces mothers to take sub-standard jobs across town while leaving their kids unattended at home. Remember that scene in *Bowling For Columbine* with the workfare Mom who worked at Dick Clark's? What happened? Her kid was killed or something. Bill Clinton did that.

Not only did Bill Clinton bomb Afghanistan to take attention away from Monica, he later bombed innocent people including the Chinese embassy, in Yugoslavia.

This is the Bill Clinton who supported TV censoring V-chip technology and pushed for unlimited cell phone tapping. This is the guy who opposed medical marijuana and pushed for increased funding of the drug war, a front for US support of corrupt South American dictators.

This is Bill Clinton, who is suddenly so loved by all the people who should hate him. I don't get it. Maybe it's because people think he's cute. Ah, it's a minor complaint. Clinton, fortunately, isn't running for president.

Kerry, though, is almost as bad. His record is abysmal, and he's making things worse.

"So," you ask, "what should I do? Should I vote for the lesser of two evils? Vote for Nader? Not vote?"

I'm glad you asked me. Here's what makes sense to me:

If you're in a "safe state," like New York or Massachusetts or Washington DC, vote for Nader or the Greens or anybody but the two bad guys. Voting for Kerry in those states is throwing away your vote. He's gonna win anyway. You might as well let him know you don't like him.

If you're in a swing state like Iowa or Wisconsin, then you've got a tough decision. What you should do in any case is tell pollsters and anyone who'll listen that you'll be voting for Nader. That way the Democrats will see that they don't have the smart voters in their pocket. They can't move any more to the right without losing votes.

When you get into the voting booth, it's up

to you. Bush is bad. There's no question about it. But is it more important to support a *real* choice, or vote for someone slightly less bad? It's a tough decision, and one of the few I won't help you make.

ENDNOTES: [*Visitors to my website: mykelboard.com or subscribers (email to: god@mykelboard.com) will usually receive a few extra endnotes. There are just too many to keep up with.*]

—>*More information dept:* For more information on The Lost Film Fest, and when it's coming to a town near you, check out its webpage at: www.lostfilmfest.com. If you're going to be in New York and want to join "Drink Club", get email information on the next one (and all future Drink Club events) by sending a request to: drinks@mykelboard.com.

—>*In case you doubt me dept:* Check out the Associated Press report of May 19, 2004. It was at a conference reported there that Kerry said he would nominate anti-abortion judges. You can find the exact wording at most any newspaper site.

—>*Bush flashes a Moon dept:* James Towey, director of the White House office of religion (aka *Faith-Based and Community Initiatives*) spoke at a Moonie event in Washington DC. Also speaking at the event were Senators Richard Lugar and Democratic Senator Danny K. Kavis.

Said the Democrat: "God has prescribed laws of behavior, and the center of these laws are love and justice."

Oh yeah, in case you think there is a shred of sanity among the Moonies, consider a recent advertisement with a quote from former President Rutherford B. Hayes: "I can only say that the Unification Principle is a great truth and that it is unmistakable the Rev. Sun Myung Moon holds all the keys to human salvation and peace."

Rutherford B Hayes died in 1893.

—>*Not too goyish dept:* My best pal, who proofreads this column, mentioned that the last one "*did make you seem like a self-loathing Jew.*" In a way, she was right. I fell into the trap set by the Israelis. Well, I'm busting out of it. There are plenty of Jews I admire. Some, because they were Jews who did Jew stuff. Some, because they happened to be Jews and did other stuff.

So, I'm starting a regular section here with *The Jew of the Month Club:*

My favorite Jew of all time is Lenny Bruce. He was a super champion of free speech in a time where those who supported it were called Commies, not terrorists. They jailed him several times and blackballed him from clubs. This lonely Jew fought back, not with an Uzi, but with humor. Eventually he lost. But what a glorious struggle!

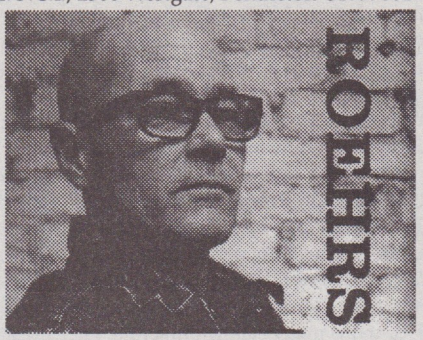
Since this is the first edition of my Jew of the Month Club, I'll also include one that Tony emailed me about:

That's SHEKEL, the inventor of 'heeb hop.' The coolest Jews are always good for a laugh. You can find more about this genius at http://wwww.50shekel.com/index.htm.

—>*Perfect Gift dept:* My pal Robb from New Orleans told me this trick. If you http to Whitehouse.gov, go to the "White House Greeting Center." There you can order "special occasion" cards signed by the president and sent to your friends. Special occasions include 80th birthdays and 50-year anniversaries. Won't your pals in jail be thrilled to get a card from 1600 Pennsylvania Ave?

—>*Pen pal dept:* I know it sounds sexist, but the guy is in jail, for fuck's sake!! He tells me it's 8 1/2 years for stealing a pair of socks!!!

So, he wants to hear from punk or anarchist *girls.* Write him: Cassidy Wheeler, #14282456, E.O.C.I., 2500 Westgate, Pendleton OR 97801



"All Fucked Up"

CRANKED UP, from Philadelphia, has a great CD released on the Ghetto Rock Label. The material on *A Call For Solidarity* was recorded in 2002 and 2003. Every song on this disc rocks really well! Pat (ex-VIOLENT SOCIETY) is a great front man and delivers the punch on this CD. Fans of THE BOILS or THE LOWER CLASS BRATS are sure to like this *Call for Solidarity* CD.

CRANKED UP and NEONMANIACS recently opened up for DEMOB and SKEPTIX in New York at CBGB's, and they kicked some punk ass! Many of the songs from the CRANKED UP set list can be found on the *A Call for Solidarity* CD. Read the set list: "Get Out!"; "Deal with It"; "All Fucked Up"; "Guilty Cons"; "New Regime"; "Make Me Sick"; "Emo-Tionally"; "Swindled"; "It's Not Right"; "Exploitation"; "Under Their Coat"; "Shotdown" and "Left Wing Scum". It was an excellent show! CRANKED UP and NEONMANICS share a really good EP – find it! Keep an eye on CRANKED UP for upcoming product! Go see CRANKED UP when they rock your city! Contact CRANKED UP at PO Box 302, Newtown, PA 18940; www.crankedup.net. For your copy of the excellent *A Call for Solidarity* CD contact Ghetto Rock label at www.ghetto-rock.com.

When attending the CRANKED UP show at CBGB's, Mr. Rich Owens (THOSE UNKNOWN) gave his highly respected recommendation to TROUBLE BOUND, one of the bands that supported CRANKED UP and DEMOB that evening. TROUBLE BOUND has a self-titled CDR available with three solid tunes jumping out at you – these guys start out with "Trouble Bound Blues", a blistering roots rock anthem that would make Jerry Lee Lewis kick his piano stool out from under his cracker ass! Track two is fast punk rock with a ferocious guitar assault. "Here To The End", has that endearing refrain, "Fuck you – I don't give a fuck". The drummer teams up with the bass player to achieve a break-neck speed – hell yes!

Song number three slows things down a bit – "Homeboys" is a first rate rock song with introspective lyrics about friends, life, home and comradery. This song has the intelligence and power that harken back to songs by THOSE UNKNOWN during "The Four of Us" era. Excellent! Contact TROUBLEBOUND at (845) 800-2716.

Mike Josephson's Longshot Records from Brooklyn, New York has a high- spirited new punk-rock CD prepared for you knuckleheads! The band is HIT AND RUN, and the CD is called *Don't Fuck with Me.* These rowdy fucks from Edmonton, Alberta Canada have produced a strong blend of 80's UK punk and snotty Southern California hardcore. The singing is first rate and the guitars remind one of BLITZ. HIT AND RUN hit the ground running with song one, "Violence." Song two fucking rocks fast!!! Venomous punk is the law of the land in "Anger." Read these words: "You say I have no future in this life / You say it's just a trend / I'll be changed in a few years / You say I'm wasting my time with this shit / I say fuck you / I've had just about enough of it / You better fuckin' run / I got anger flowin' through my veins / It's about to be unleashed on you / You say I'm just tryin' to cover who I really am / Little do you know that this is really me / You say you'll put a bullet in my head / But that's just an excuse / I know that you're fucking weak / Don't tell me I'm wrong / Don't tell me I'm just wasting my time / Don't tell me it's just a trend / Cuz you're just pissing me off". Yes- that's good shit!

In song number four, these Canadian punks show their love for the cops, read "Boys in Blue": "They strut along, with violent pride / Leaving us nowhere to hide / Fighting. Killing. Full of hate / It's our lives that are at stake / Hostage to the boys in blue / What the hell we gonna do? / Boys in blue, boys in blue / You better run they're after you / Boys in blue, boys in blue / You know it's true. Fuck you. / They hate us, they're our defense / They protect us? That makes no sense / Doesn't matter what we do / We're automatically accused / Even if we're just standing there / They'll lock us up, no they don't care / Well not it's time, to take a stand / Fight for what's ours, take back this land / One by one, they will fall / Then equality for all / now they'll be begging on their knees / We'll throw 'em in jail and lose the keys".

All these punk songs have an anthemic sing-a-long quality . Songs about drinking ("Drunk and Retarded") and politics just seem to go together. HIT AND RUN write a nice tribute to the government in Ottawa, read "God Bless the Government": "God bless the government / the one that taxed my every cent / Legal robbery / 'Til there's fuck all left for me / God bless the government / Throw my opinion, they throw a fit / Declarations of Independence / Independence smells like shit / Freedom of speech, what a joke / God bless the government / I question you, you fucking choke / God bless the government / God bless the government / the one that makes no sense

/ Contradict their every act / Head of states a boozehound that's a fact / God bless the government / the one that preaches lies / Get this you bloody prick / I see right through your disguise". Hell Yes!!! Longshot Records has another fine entrant in the punk rock political wars!

HIT AND RUN will make a strong first impression on syou punks – keep an ear peeled for these feisty punk rockers! Contact Longshot Music at PMB #72, 302 Bedford Ave, Brooklyn, NY 11211; www.longshotmusic.com.

Rodent Popsicle Records, from Massachusetts, has a volatile four-band compilation out right now featuring four of California's toughest punk/ hardcore bands. MONSTER SQUAD, from Vacaville, California, initiates the proceedings with four tracks of brute force hardcore punk. The howling vocals of this band will crush you! You get to hear MONSTER SQUAD power through "Rock and Roll Anti-Hero," "D.F.A.," and "No Destiny." The standout track is "Won't Conform" —read these words: "My life, my choice / My spirit, my voice / Won't take your shit / Won't take your lies / Not you, not me / Don't see what you see / Don't live, like you / Cuz I see right through / If you wanna pacify your thoughts / Your feelings burn inside / Subject yourself, forget yourself / You just lost your pride / Personality suicide / You're not what I am / Strength is, when I stand / My game, my rules / Game over, you lose / Won't die, too strong / Life is, but one song / Too fast, for you / My lyrics, too true".

Band number two, Sacramento's own WHISKEY REBELS perpetuate the thrashing momentum that MONSTER SQUAD started. Big Chuck and the WHISKEY REBELS plow through "Dope Famous Blast Fiend's"; "Gang War"; "Throwaway"; a NEGATIVE APPROACH cover, "Tied Down"; and the pissed off "Lie, Cheat, Repeat". Give these lyrics a spin: "Reputation / Is the cornerstone / Power / And you ain't got no love here / Expectations / Lower than a coffin / Dies / Every so often / Lit cheat repeat / You ain't got no love here".

ABUSE, also hailing from Vacaville, stir up the hardcore cauldron with shrill vocals and steaming guitars! You get "March On"; "Suburban Wasteland"; "Man In Blue"; and "Violent Youth". Check these lyrics to "Violent Youth": "Raised on violence, turned way too tough / Kids didn't like him he played too rough / A teenage hooligan with a taste for blood / Cross him and wind up face down in the mud / Tough as nails with no convictions / Burn and raised on aggression / He does what they tell him and he doesn't think twice / He doesn't get attention, so he gets into fights / He can't help it, its in his nature / Violent youth, violent youth / He's a mindless thug with something to prove / Violent youth, violent youth / He's an insecure bastard and he's got no mind / Don't be surprised, he's not one of a kind / He gets his kicks from bashing skulls / but this lifestyle of his will take its toll".

El Cerrito's hardcore heroes, CROPKNOX, close out the festivities on this CD with three thunderous punk barn-burners. CROPKNOX kicks you in the brain immediately with "Do What". These guys fucking punk-out like a motherfucker! You get to hear "Old Song" – damn decent! "I Despise" is one song that will stick with you after this CD is over. Read these bitter comments: "Sometimes I need a thrill to come alive / Other times I just want to die / Confusion and anger will take a toll / But in the end, we got no control / Brain chemistry or the life you choose / Maybe some people are born to loose / Life's unforgiving when you're born on your own / A friend of mine never made it home / Fear of life / The whole fucking world I despise / Fear of life – let's go!" Very good!! To get this fine CD contact Rodent Popsicle at www.rodentpopsicle.com.

While we are on the subject of great Northern California hardcore let's recap: STRUNG UP had a brilliant hardcore punk LP put out not too long ago on Kangaroo Records. This fucker is still stabbing out of the speakers and fucking your shit up. *The Society Rot in Hell LP* contains many classic punk hits. The "Priest Song" is one of the most thorough indictments of the clergy ever committed to vinyl! Read these scathing lyrics: "Lately we hear all this talk of priests and sex abuse / But it's only been a few years since we've seen it on the news / How long has it been goin' on, how many kids lives been destroyed / By a 'Pillar of Society' preying on little girls and boys / Your hypocrisy is disgusting to say the fucking least / Would Christ be so forgiving if he were raped by a priest / Would he say to love thy neighbor and turn the other cheek / Just what kind of lesson are you trying to teach / If your religion is based on love, why do your actions reflect hate / BASTARDS / Call yourself a man of god, is god's message rape? / You preach against perversion but you practice sodomy / Worse than crooked politicians or cops on the take / You're a monster in a collar, a fiend wearing priest's robes / how can you live like this, you should slit your own throat / What's wrong with your faith when your kids aren't safe at church / When your religious leaders deviate then what's your religion worth / Not a goddamned thing".

Another important song on this excellent LP is "Heard It Was So", about rumour-mongers and the people who listen to them. Read on: "How can you be so quick to condemn based on a rumor or a word heard from a friend / It's your decision to make not that of your peers / How can you say I'm this way or that way / You don't even know just heard it was so / We've never met, but your opinion is set / Guilty by association through ignorance and idiocy / Because people believe the bullshit that you spread through out the scene / Inspect each situation, try to see from both sides / Seek out the truth, bury the lies / You can't believe all that you hear / It's your decision not that of your peers".

This album is fucking great! You get a litany of head trauma hardcore songs - here are some of them: "B.R. Act," "Bomb the Enemies," "Disciple," "Get Tough," "Turned Up Noses," "P.C. For Now," "Police In Graves," "Most of All," "Society Rot In Hell," "Heroin Chic," "Death by Cop," and "Christ Air not Christ."

This is an amazing record!!! Get one now! Contact STRUNG UP at www.strung-up.com. Write to Kangaroo Records, c/o Henk Smit, Middenweg 13, 1098 AA Amsterdam, Holland; www.geocities.com/tysonkangaroo.

Until next month – see you fucks at the bar!

The New Racism: Hipsters Get Twisted

Well it finally happened, though I didn't see this one coming. I had wondered what was next, after electro-clash, after the revival of the "Me Generation," after off-the-shoulder sweatshirts and big plastic earrings and Larry Tee got tired. And here it is, as appropriate as Bush taking over office from Reagan, or people ditching cocaine for crack. All of my friends got racist. The politically-minded punk rock brats of yester-year are now the retro Nike-wearing defenders of racial slurs. Have they simply taken irony too far? And more importantly, can I claim not to know them?

While some still stick to the now oft-heard adage that irony died with the twin towers, the majority of university aged boys and girls enjoy proving time and time again that they know how to be ironic. The most unfortunate symptom of such irony pissing contests of late may be the intentional racist comments that, while once serving to poke fun at bigots, now serve to prove how politically incorrect straight white people can be, all for the sake of sounding cool. Irreverence has gone the way of making fun of retards. The question is, are we still being ironic, or have we simply become politically slack?

While the subcultural experience, like any experience in our post-everything world, varies exponentially between individuals, the basis for those in DIY punk rock/hardcore/ riot grrrl communities in the mid to late 90s was that of a subversion of mainstream culture, music, and politics. After my own fledgling years of being teased and bullied and humiliated for being a weird chubby kid with red glasses and braces, I myself rejected my rejectees by turning to music. Bands such as Sonic Youth and Bikini Kill led me to other punk and riot grrl bands, fanzines, and fashion, thus raising my feminist consciousness, and leading me to a total acceptance of punk rock leftist ideology. Moreover, punk instilled in me a flat out determination to be in all ways rebellious of the mainstream.

Subculture is based on a similar aesthetic, musical preference, and political ideology. An escape for outsiders from mainstream society, from the bullies and the jocks and the abusive

parents, an escape into the city for the suburbanites, a venue for after-school activities not pertaining to hockey or cheerleading- such are the basis for entering communities of like-minded dissenters. Unfortunately, as the kids with the Xs on their hands, the fishnets, the baggy sweatshirts, and the mohawks get older, they fuse and have nothing left against which to rebel. They go to college. They meet like-minded peers. And they begin to rebel not against society, but against their former selves.

This phenomenon has been particularly noticeable as of late, in my peers, other hipsters, as well as in media such as *Vice* and *Raygun* wherein increasingly conservative ideology is displayed. And why is the pendulum swinging to the right? Why are the kids who once denounced chicken now eating steak, the feminists speaking softer and softer, and the once outspoken anti-racist activists telling racist jokes? It may be that irony, the cultural currency of hipsters in the 2000s, has finally gone too far.

While the over-use of irony may have shifted it's use from subversion to mean-spiritedness, this sort of backlash against one's former self is not to be confused with the phenomenon of what the *New York Times* has labelled the "hipublicans." Hipublicans, in contrast, are those youth who have embraced conservatism in their efforts at rebellion, wherein those interested in "cool through consumerism" look hip while maintaining conservative political leanings. While it may be equally disturbing that cool no longer equates with leftist leanings, what I will call "the new racism" alternately cuts deep into those who in fact once fought hard *against* conservative ideology. This concept of fighting against one's own past may be an effort to keep up with the cache of irony, or even a reaction to one's past naïve idealism. It is however, in a different camp from those attempting cool through the conformity of their consumption, irrespective of ideology. The use of ironic racism in my peers comes from people who know better.

I first noticed the tendency of my acquaintances to use racist comments as a sort of lazy substitute for humor, while attending a party with a group of people I knew from the Montreal music scene. While in one breath they discussed the new-found ubiquity of the band The Unicorns, the majority of this group turned in the next to making fun of JAPS (Jewish American Princesses) and the Chinese. Jay Watts, ex-band member of Fuck Me USA, and an acquaintance who agreed, gleefully, to be interviewed on the subject, says that it was meeting other leftist thinkers that both disillusioned him and prevented his accordance with the politically correct. Jay drew a swastika on the host's living room chalkboard that night, laughing at those with less than amused expressions upon viewing what he declared to be his art. At a separate party in the plateau later that month, Jay spewed drunkenly about the quality of Mussolini as opposed to Hitler, as well as his reasons as to why racist commentary should be acceptable. Arguing that racism is just funny and that it subverts leftist dogma, Jay appeared oblivious to other effects it could have, for example personally harming those around him. When I argued that such comments would most likely not be said by him, or any of our other friends, in the presence of people of color, he shrugged, and said that more importantly to him, political correctness had got out of control. I left the party confused. While there is a recurring argument in leftist circles concerning whether political correctness harbours honest discourse, were racial slurs and purposeful offensiveness the answer?

In an effort to demonstrate why racist comments were in effect harmless, Jay acted as somewhat of a researcher (spy?) for me in the upcoming weeks, reporting back when any of his friends made racist jokes. An example of one such report: "Me, Dave*, Alden*, and Monroe* were drinking together at Alden's, and Dave* said, "You know what's funny?" And Alden* was like, "What?" So Dave* said, "The holocaust." And Alden* said, "No it's not! It didn't happen!" The purposefulness of idiocy here is thus at the root of my friends' transgressions. However, when such idiocy becomes ingrained, it is difficult to distinguish between irony and internalized racism. At a loft show, a friend I'll call Darren* reacted to my description of a person with big lips with, "Was he a nigger?" When I became upset, he berated my "knee-jerk reaction" and began a long diatribe against political correctness. Was Darren* defending the use of irony to deride 'real racists?' It seemed more the case that he wanted to be able to express his racist assumptions without having "liberals on his case." I knew that Darren had grown up in a small town, preferring books to sports, and had been labelled a fag by his peers. This was not the typical source of racist commentary, and it was more than disturbing.

"People just forget that they're in a subculture" offered Jenny Craig, founder of Montreal's Church of Craft, when asked her opinions on the topic. "They don't think they're hurting anyone because they've been separate from mainstream culture for so long. Also, they don't really know very many people of colour." Another friend, Michelle Sterling, herself a person of color, comments that it's just boys trying to be funny. "They're so oblivious to how hurtful they're being. They assume that when they deride Jewish people, they're being ironic. If a Jewish person turns out to be in the room, they become belligerent and defensive." However, there are hipster girls in the racist mix. My friend Susan* for example, recently debated with me for over an hour as to whether it's okay to make fun of people based on ethnicity. "It's like making fun of people for any other reason." If that's true, then why do racist comments upset me so much? Rather than knee-jerk political correctness, troubled reactions to the flippant use of racism may come from one's foresight regarding the effects of bigotry. How can people of colour, or more importantly, *why* should people of colour, differentiate between ignorance and irony? If one uses racist slurs, who is to say that they don't come from what that person truly believes? My friends' supposed attempts at belittling racism by using it ironically are, in my opinion, post-revolutionary comments in a pre-revolutionary world.

Unfortunately, as conservative ideology appears more frequently in media often digested by those in subcultures, such arguments for the use of racist commentary have become recurrent. New York based *Vice* magazine, a bible of sorts for the guys who wore trucker hats for too long, and then made fun of them for even longer afterward, puts forth somewhat of a guideline for just how far society can push racism disguised as hipster irony. While Vice is an ideologically conservative magazine, demonstrated by it's co-founder Gavin McInnes's recent article "Hip to be Square" (August 11, 2003), many remain unaware of it's conservatism, finding it humorous precisely because it is part of the backlash against political correctness. In his article, which was published in Pat Buchanan's magazine *American Conservative*, McInnes calls hipublicans "a light at the end of the anti-American tunnel," and blames Spanish people for the degradation of school systems. Though he doesn't shy away from his conservatism in Buchanan's magazine, *Vice*'s own political agenda is rather more covert.

In "Hip to be Square," McInnes cites cool hunter *The Cassandra Report*, which ranks *Vice* as the number one read for women aged 19-24 and for men aged 25-30. Whereas *Vice*'s focus is on consumerism, sex, drugs, and what is currently in or cool, the magazine manages to slip in racist jokes, sexist commentary, and props in it's Fashion Do's and Don'ts to those wearing anything with a swastika on it. Disguising its conservatism as subversive humour, Vice has helped to make acceptable right wing commentary to those once decidedly to the left of the political spectrum. McInnes himself notices a shift in readership politics, writing, "a new group was emerging, and the vitriolic "You dudes are all Nazis" letters were being replaced by ones saying "You dudes are finally telling the truth." Whereas McInnes's own beliefs concerning "the truth" are debatable at best, his assertion that *Vice* has altered the political landscape of hipster youth may be to some extent true. Whether or not the reader is aware of *Vice*'s agenda, it's frequent use of words like "fags" "retards" "fag-retards" "drunken squaws," etc., may become more acceptable upon each read.

If the hipster bible of North America maintains a conservative ideology, where does that leave those youth of today dissenting from the mainstream? Historically, young people have been able to choose between subcultures to resist commercialized youth images (such as the teen pop group phenomena). As a resource of rebellion, music particularly has helped to guide youth into communities from which they can draw to create valid social criticisms. Not since the early 90s, however, have waves of politically charged music—including DC hardcore, riot grrrl, squat punk, and even indie pop—been relevant. Each of these genres, while

adding to the history of rock, has for the most part shifted, died down, or been spread so thin as to be practically nonexistant. Perhaps the largest subculture of late is that of emo, or emotional hardcore, which maintains roots in hardcore and punk. Emo, however, is this music watered down, without political meaning or ideological rebellion. While it may be slightly heavier than mass-marketed music, it is rebellion for the sake of it; emo vocals protest little else than romance gone wrong. The role of politics in subculture is currently unclear, and it's possible that today's twenty-somethings are to blame. With the shift to the right seen in hipster polemics, will the weird kids of today have less of an outlet for rebellion?

If the trend of ironic racism is demonstrative of the current dearth of politics in music-oriented subculture, it may take the next generation reacting to our apathy to lessen the stigma associated with political correctness. It is still uncertain whether this trend is where "racism with a smile" gets uglier, or whether people really are innocent enough to believe they're just making fun of the "real" racists. Are people just buying the backlash against political correctness because they're too lazy to do otherwise, or (really) deep within their sentiments does there lie some grain of meaning? It seems paradoxical that belonging to a subculture could be one's political downfall, but perhaps people need to see how ugly the real world is to care

The World The Day Turned Dayglo

Hey everybody. I don't know, this whole last column business is creeping me out. I read all the shit over this weekend. You know, all the columns I did. I was hoping that I'd run into some shit, some common thread or wisdom I could then drop on the last column bonanza. I got nothing. Well, nothing except thinking Lubrano is totally sweet.

I am fucking proud though. I found punk in these pages, and I learned about punk in these pages. And like a lot of us, punk rock saved my life. *MaximumRockNRoll* did that.

The first thing that fucking amazed me about punk rock and *MaximumRockNRoll* was the total lack of division between who was a fan and who was a participant. It was like participation was a fucking requirement.

This wasn't TV; it wasn't fucking *Rolling Stone*, or Sunday School. Immediately I wanted to help. Cuz, to me, helping with *MaximumRockNRoll* was helping with punk itself. This wasn't some street-team bullshit where you're helping some asshole sell records. Helping with *MRR* was putting your 2 cents in on defining what punk was. And as much as punk meant to me, I wanted some fucking say in what it *meant*.

The first thing I contributed to *MRR* was an interview with this his old buddy I had, named Thibault, who roadied for DBS. I even did the page layout for it and sent it in. When I finally saw that issue on the shelf at the record store, I was fucking stupefied. I just kept staring at my name on that credits page. That shit was next to George Tabb!

I don't know. This is fucking exhausted-dude nostalgia, I know, but fuckin' a, I'm proud for contributing to this shit and being a part of it. *MaximumRockNRoll* is fucking awesome. Thanks all dudes and dudettes who made and continue to make this shit happen. Up tha fuckin' punx.

Metal Health

I'm doing pretty sweet lately. I think I'm looking at stuff kind of different than I have in the past. I'm not totally sure how, but I've got some ideas I'm working on. Looking back at all the columns I did is pretty cool for me, too. I'm going to miss the obligation to write every month. It was scary as hell, and totally humiliating a lot of the time, but what the fuck man? It was neat. Plus now if I start with a new shrink, I can just hand 'em handbook on my stupid ass.

DIY Punk

In my first column I laid out a mission statement about documenting and profiling DIY labels out there. I wanted my column to serve as place to find out about the labels that were putting out bands' first 7"es and trading 'em and shit. My column fell away from that. But, fuckin' a, somebody should be doing that shit.

Fuck, Sorry, Thanks

Okay dudes, I stink, I'm fucking exhausted and two days late on this column. Thanks for listening. Big fucking thanks to everyone who wrote me, read my shit, and worked on *MRR*.

Endnotes:

1. Dude, did anyone right in calling me a homophobe for calling *MaximumRocknRoll* gay? What the fuck? The terrorists have truly won if something so un-PC doesn't get a rise out of readership! If you're old and geeky you may have noticed that was a nod to Reverand Norb's finale column.
2. Thanks to Arwen, Mike and MAN IS THE BASTARD.
3. Fuck, thanks to KRUPTED PEASANT FARMERZ, GORILLA BISCUITS, BORN AGAINST, STRUGGLE, PLOW UNITED, and SPLURGE too.
4. Crap, you think I can keep just my endnotes section, and skip the column every month?

After a brief hiatus I'm back at *MRR*. I have spent four of the last seven months on tour across the USA. First I was out with Vitamin X and Wolfbrigade in the spring. Then I was home to work my ass off for a few months, making enough cash to get some new releases out and put money down on a new tour van. Since July I've been on the road with my band Damage Deposit, followed by Victims and then Skitsystem from Sweden. As I write this I'm still on the road with Skitsystem, but by the time you read it, I'm sure said tour will be only a fond memory. I put my foot in it earlier this year in this magazine and decided that I should take a little break. I was not fired or censored; I voluntarily stepped down from a lot of my punk activities. I wanted to take a step back from all the negativity and shit talking going around the scene and really bust ass to do something positive that would make a difference in the scene. I managed to fly over four bands from Europe book four tours totaling over 125 shows, put on two festivals, and release eight new records on my label. I'll be back at Extreme Noise when I get home and will also start working with the Independent Music Foundation again to open a new all ages show space.

Some people let themselves get consumed by hate, envy and bitterness. I want to rise above the petty and reach for something more fulfilling. You only get once chance on this earth and I want to try to make a contribution rather than just be a hater or an ankle biter. I've said and done some things I'm not proud of, and I've certainly been misquoted and misunderstood for some time. But I'd like to see those who seem intent on cutting me down channel their energy into something positive instead.

I'm going to talk more about touring and DIY hardcore next month, but for this month I want to talk about the upcoming election. I know a lot of people, even some die hard anarchists, who are all fired up to vote in this election. To be honest, for a while I was too. But the more I think about it, the more convinced I am not to vote in this election. Looking at the candidates offered, Bush, Kerry, Nader, none of these guys represent me. What do a bunch of millionaire conservatives and millionaire liberals have to say to me? Whoever wins the rich will still get richer, the poor will still get poorer and the corporate elite will continue to screw over the working class in the country. I understand many people's outrage at Bush and his policies. I guess I wouldn't hold it against anyone who voted against him out of sheer anger or disgust. However, I can't vote for a guy like Kerry in good conscience any more than I could have voted for Al Gore in the last election. Like most Americans of voting age, I don't vote. I am registered actually, and voted in a few local elections for city government, but I've sat out every presidential election since I was eligible. Pundits like to blame the record low turnout among young people at the polls on apathy. But I know this is not the case. Most people my age and younger realize that it doesn't make much difference. *Either way we're still fucked.*

And now this, I gotta call bullshit on Fat Records and Punkvoter.com. I've been around for a while and I can remember quite well that

NOFX was one of the main bands that broke into the mainstream by mocking political punk, activists and animal rights. Fat Mike has no right to bemoan the "apathy" of young punks when he has made a career and fortune promoting the "don't worry, be happy" version of mall punk that went out of it's way to mock activists, straight edge, and political punk. I always hated NOFX and their ilk. The watered down squeaky-clean mall safe punk that was devoid of any threat or social commentary. To me bands like this represented the worse version of punk. Turning the music of the streets and rebellion and the only form of social expression left to alienated young people into a soundtrack for frat keggers and trips to the mall. I even respect Nazi Oi bands more because at least those guys were willing to take a stand for something they believe in. Now suddenly Fat Records is all fired up against Bush. You can buy NOFX records with newly minted political lyrics, *Rock Against Bush* CDS and of course "Not My President" T shirts with the Fat Records logo conveniently screened on the back. Get real folks. Liberal outrage against Bush, no matter how well founded, is a big business. Michael Moore, Al Franken and Fat Mike are taking liberal America's disdain for Bush all the way to bank. Where were NOFX and Fat Mike in the days of Rock Against Reagan? Urging punks to vote for the Democratic Party is so ridiculous I don't even want to get started. Whenever I see someone with an agenda I want to know who's pulling the strings and who's collecting the cash. The whole thing reminds me of washed up "never was" rock star Bob Geldof's attempt to salvage his career with "We are the World." The whole thing reeks of a publicity stunt and an excuse to flog some merch on the backs of the youth in their discontent. If Bush wins in November you can stay tuned for *Rock Against Bush Volume 2* and "Still Not My President" shirts all with the Fat Records logo conveniently on display.

Sometimes, when things seem out of order and whatever-it-is-exactly that's bothering you feels out of reach, all it takes is finding something worldly to re-organize in order to get yourself going again. Case in point, I've spent the last few nights up to my elbows in dust, green-tape residue, and the skeletal remains of thousands of tiny little bugs trying to tidy up the *Maximumrocknroll* record collection*. The project is a pretty hefty one, involving taking thousands of records off of their shelves—which extend from the kitchen all the way down the hallway and around the corner*—cleaning said shelves, and laying down masonite to secure the records a bit better. It's no coincidence that my mood has improved over the course of the week; there's nothing like exercising control over something easy to manipulate like a bunch of records to revive my flagging conviction in the breadth of my ability to control anything at all.

Nerdy hobbies are also a good fall back, which is probably why I have been on a reckless record-buying bender; I've also eaten lots of cookies, gotten a haircut, and listened to any Dangerhouse 7" I can get my hands on. Remember though, you can only take these things so far before you end up broke, fat, bald, or deaf, so it's probably not a bad idea for you (read: me) to go for a walk, teach myself Arabic, or get a kitten. Maybe next month.

Shit, my column is making me sound like I'm sad, which I'm not—whoops! Didn't mean to give ya'll the wrong impression. There's plenty of stuff to be excited about, not the least of which is my premature pick for record of the year, the OBSERVERS *So What's Left Now LP.* This LP, available to you from the fine Vinyl Warning label in Portland, manages the precious feat of sounding unique without forsaking even an ounce of punk rocking-ness. Something of the WIPERS, the NEWTOWN NEUROTICS, and the BUZZCOCKS is in their sound, but I advise you to check this one out for yourself instead of relying on me to tell you what it's like.

A quick plug: This time next week I'll be back on the East Coast for a few days to play a handful of shows with my band FALSE SECURITY. I am particularly excited to see Finnish legends RATTUS and to play with SLEEPER CELL again, though I am excited most-of-all just to play the drums after a two and a half month hiatus. Hopefully I won't suck! If you want to hear our demo, write to Chris and Spencer at 347 S. 5th Street, Brooklyn NY 11211, and look for a 7" record someday/maybe/I hope in the future.

OK, I'm only going to tell you this once: calling people "fags" isn't funny, whether it is in person, in writing, or on the internet. This is punk rock, and I'm not your mom or your parole officer so there's not much I can do about it if you don't want listen. Call me too PC and I'll call you an idiot, and it'll be your loss, not mine.

Well, there you have it folks, the good, the bad, and the ugly. Until the next, if you want to send me love notes, vegetarian recipes, your punk zine, cases of Brooklyn Lager, or your extra copy of the KORO 7" email me first at golnar@maximumrocknroll.com, because I am on the waiting list for a PO Box.

*Cheers to Clara and Paco for doing even more work than me, and to Paul for instigating the project to begin with. Thanks in advance (well, it won't be in advance once this is actually printed) to anyone else who helps out in the coming weeks.

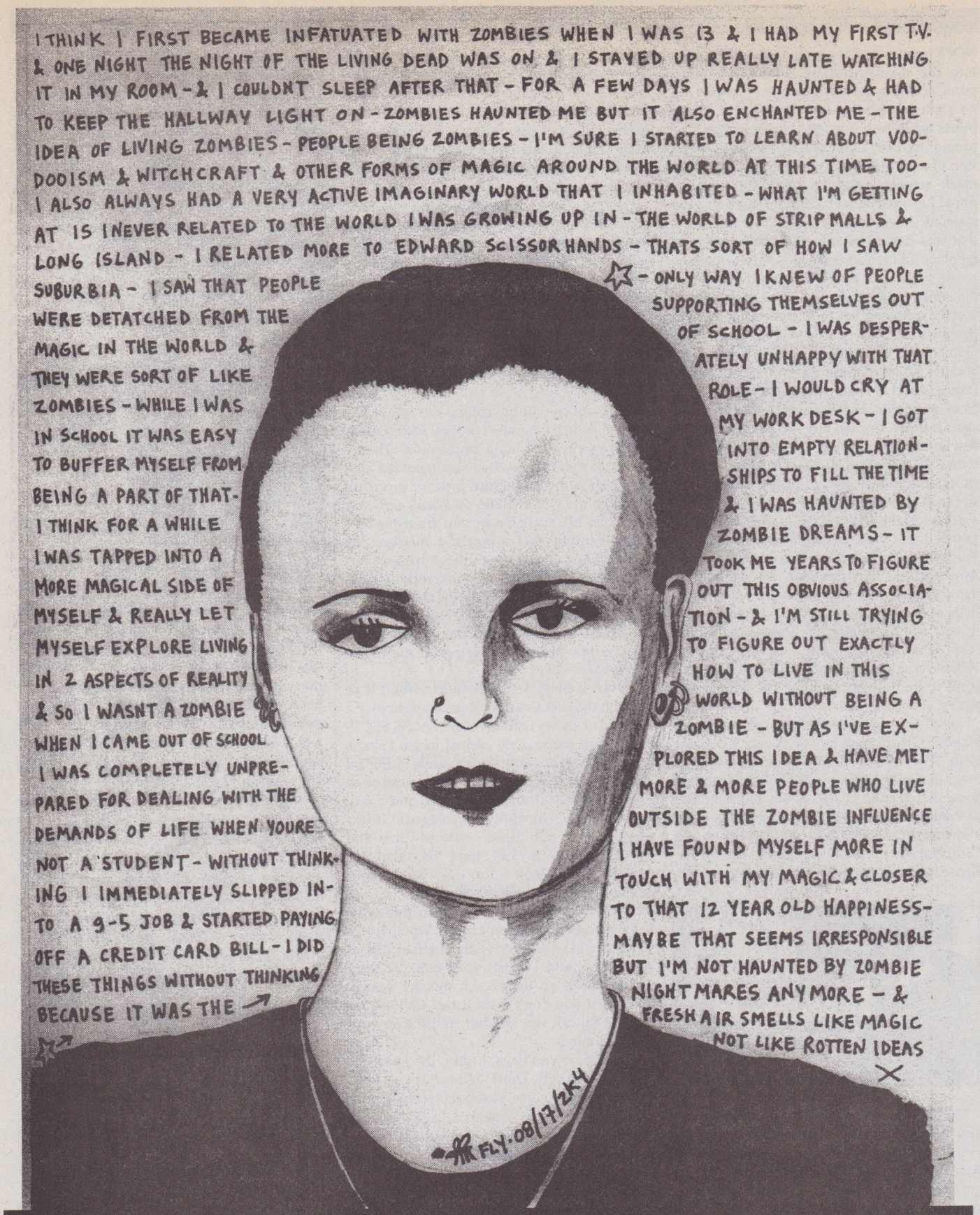
* To give you an idea of how long of a hall this is, and help you gauge just how many records I'm talking I'll tell you a story. We watched *The Ring* here the other night, and after the movie was over and everyone had either gone home or gone to bed, I stayed up to check to see if I'd gotten any email (yes), check to see if the Mets had won (no), and finish up some stuff I had been working on. After a while, I decided it was time to get the laundry I had done earlier, which was in the laundry room at the end of the hall, and go to bed myself. I walked to the edge of the room and peered down the unlit corridor to find that I was *too scared to get my laundry.* It was just too far away, it was dark, and I couldn't see all the way to the end. I blame the little undead girl from *The Ring* and not the record collection, but I hope I've made my point.

Not much space left for me this month, but I've been thinking quite a bit about this whole conservative punk backlash lately. I am, of course slightly befuddled by the whole thing. Especially as someone who has always viewed punk in the context of it being, at its most ideal, part of a greater culture of resistance, and at its most basic level just a giant middle finger in the face of authority. Now what does lobbying for George Bush and supporting a war have to do with waving your middle finger at authority?

I mean really, is it just a backlash against the Punkvoter thing and people like Fat Mike's unabashed support for the Democratic Party? I mean I find that shit just as sickening and gross as most of those conservative punx do—but you don't see me turning into a complete moron, campaigning in support for Karl Rove's sinister "New American Century." While I'm in full support of being overtly critical of Kerry, the whole Punkvoter thing and tend to view the Democrats and Republicans as two sides of a coin that I'd like to fling into the ocean, what the Bush administration is pulling is straight up frightening and what I can't believe that so-called punx are falling for it!

Think about it—what is so fucking rebellious about the USA Patriot act? Or faith based initiatives? Or the rolling back of FCC regulations and the consolidation of media into a few giant mega-companies? Or torture? Or giving tax breaks to the richest elements of society—while the rest of us suffer? Or Reagan style roller coaster deficit spending? Or fucking John Ashcroft, Donald Rumsfeld and Dick Cheney? Or secret no fly lists? Or a state of constant war?

I just don't get it.



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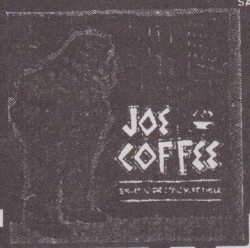

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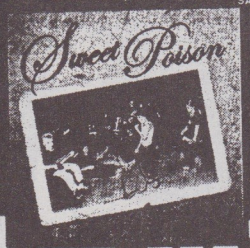

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MRR NEWS

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AN INVITATION TO TERRORISTS?

U.S. TO SHIP OVER 300 POUNDS OF WEAPONS-GRADE PLUTONIUM ACROSS ATLANTIC

From Democracy Now

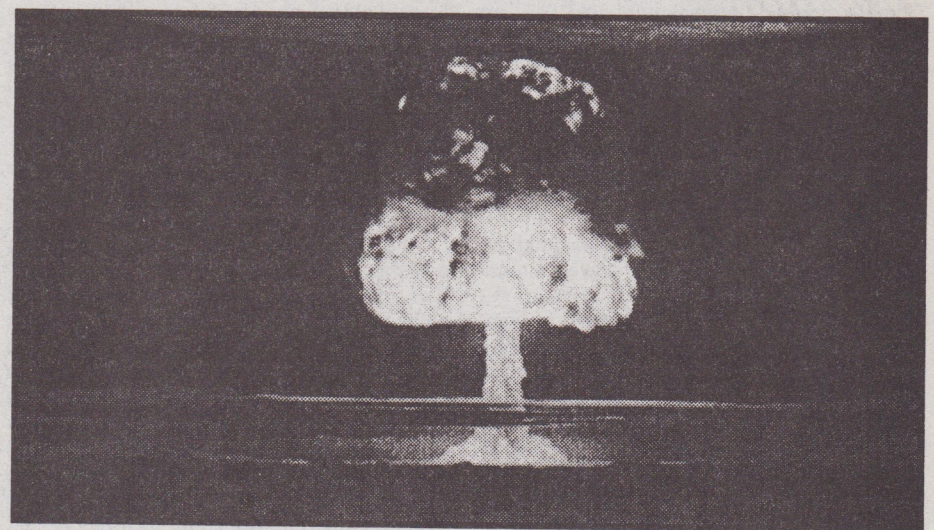
Greenpeace has launched a campaign to stop a controversial shipment that contains enough plutonium to make up to 50 nuclear weapons. While the government hasn't done a threat or environmental assessment of the trip, the Department of Homeland Security has admitted it has conducted assessments of protest groups opposed to the shipment.

In an unprecedented trip, two British ships are preparing to carry some 300 pounds of pure weapons-grade plutonium from Charleston South Carolina across the Atlantic to France.

The U.S. government claims the trip is necessary in the name of national security. The plutonium is being sent to France where it will be made into mixide oxide or MOX fuel and then returned to the United States. The process will turn uranium into a fuel usable in nuclear power plants. A spokesperson for the Department of Energy said the whole purpose of the MOX program is to get rid of nuclear weapons.

But Greenpeace and local environmental groups are warning the trip far is too risky.

Texas Congressman Jim Turner recently warned that the theft of the plutonium would be "catastrophic". Enough plutonium is being shipped to make up to 50 nuclear weapons.



And the Department of Homeland Security has admitted it has conducted neither an Environmental Impact Statement nor a formal threat assessment on the shipment. But the Department has revealed that it has been keeping close watch on environmental groups opposed to the trip.

In a letter to Congressman Ed Markey of Massachusetts, a Department of Homeland Security official admitted the agency had conducted a "field intelligence report concerning environmental activist groups and their potential to impact this shipment." [Read Letter (PDF)]

Although the national media has ignored this story, protests have been occurring in Charleston South Carolina and in France. Yesterday French police arrested 11 Greenpeace activists after they entered the military arsenal in Normandy. In South Carolina, activists have been camped out along the Charleston shore awaiting the arrival of the two British ships, the Pacific Pintail and the Pacific Teal.

ANTI-COP RIOT IN CHICAGO

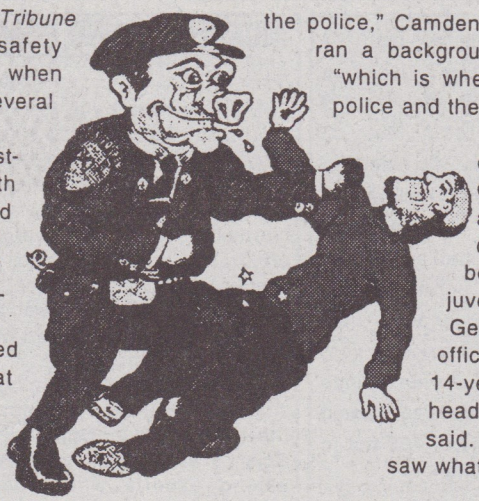
From the Chicago Tribune

A South Side community's public safety demonstration was marred by violence when police and residents clashed, leading to several injuries and arrests.

Two adults and four juveniles were arrested on the corner of 71st Street and South University Avenue just as several hundred neighbors gathered for the third annual Hands Across the Neighborhood for District Safety—a community relations event sponsored by the Grand Crossing District.

The unrest started after police responded to reports of an assault on that corner at 6p.m., said police spokesman Pat Camden.

As police tried to break up a fight involving several men, Norman Shipp, 29, began to cause a disturbance and shouted, "fuck the police," Camden said. The officers took Shipp into custody, ran a background check and released him, Camden said, "which is when the crowd started throwing rocks at the police and their squad car."



As police tried to make arrests, one officer was hit in the face with a rock, Camden said, leaving him with a bloody nose and broken glasses. Another officer discharged pepper spray to subdue the crowd before Shipp, Karine Manuel, 37, and four juveniles were arrested.

Gerald Manuel, Karine Manuel's brother, said the officers used excessive force on the crowd. "My 14-year-old nephew needed three stitches in his head after the police hit him with a baton," he said. "Hundreds of neighbors were out here. They saw what really happened."

GLOBAL WARMING THREATENS INNUIT

Stephen Leahy/Inter Press Service

Climate change will soon make the Arctic regions of the world nearly unrecognizable, dramatically disrupting traditional Inuit and other northern native peoples' way of life, according to a new report that has yet to be publicly released. The dire predictions are just some of the findings by the Arctic Climate Impact Assessment (ACIA), an unprecedented four-year scientific investigation into the current and future impact of climate change in the region. The report predicts the depletion of summer sea ice, which will push marine mammals like polar bears, walrus and some seal species into extinction by the middle of this century, Watt-Cloutier told IPS.

The assessment was commissioned by the Arctic Council, an inter-governmental body involving the eight Arctic nations—Canada, Denmark, Finland, Sweden, Iceland, Norway, Russia, and the United States. The Inuit and other Arctic peoples also participate in the Council and contributed to the ACIA report, along with over 600 hundred scientists from around the world. Although complete, it will not be made public or presented to governments until after the U.S. presidential elections at a conference in Reykjavik, Iceland, Nov. 9-12.

The impacts of climate change are already widely felt in the Arctic. Thawing permafrost—the normally perpetually frozen layer of earth—has collapsed roads and buildings. Unexpectedly thinner sea ice and small streams that have become raging rivers have led to several drownings in recent years, according to Watt-Cloutier. "Our traditional wisdom on how to survive and thrive on the land is becoming useless because everything is changing and changing fast."

Alaska experienced its warmest and driest summer ever this year, Patricia Anderson of the ACIA Secretariat University of Alaska said in an interview. Temperatures soared 10 degrees C. [50 degrees F.] above normal and millions of hectares of forest burned in the worst wildfires ever recorded, following several recent years with major fires. And now the state is facing infestations from the spruce budworm, a tree-eating insect that had only plagued southern forests previously. Unable to provide details on the report itself, Anderson confirmed that the report documents that these are not just unusual events but are in fact trends. "Sea ice will continue to get thinner, there will be much more melting of permafrost and more coastal erosion due to stronger storm surges. These are the results of climate change."

The Arctic is warming twice as fast as anywhere else because of global air circulation patterns and natural feedback loops such as less ice reflecting sunlight, leading to increased warming at ground level and more ice melt. Computer projections by the ACIA show that trend will continue with the Arctic warming by an average of 6 degrees C by the end of the century—even if the Kyoto Protocol commitments to reducing greenhouse gases go into effect on a global scale. And yet things could be even worse. Scientists deliberately selected moderate projections to avoid controversy, Anderson said. "The rest of the world needs to pay attention to what's happening in the Arctic because it's acting as an early warning barometer for what will happen in the rest of the world," said Watt-Cloutier. If that's not reason enough, another key finding in the ACIA report, Anderson said, is the concern that the melting of Arctic ice and snow will dump enough fresh water into the Arctic ocean to slow or shut down the vital North Atlantic Ocean conveyor current. This conveyor current brings warm tropical waters north and moderates temperatures in eastern North America and Europe. Large volumes of fresh water spilling out of the Arctic Ocean could slow its northward movement, leading to an abrupt climate shift where the region would experience much cooler temperatures in just a few years time. Some scientists have detected signs that this may be already starting to happen.

Despite the alarming evidence, there is little good news when it comes to taking action on climate change. Carbon dioxide emissions are climbing globally, including by the biggest contributor, the United States. "The Bush administration doesn't believe there's a problem and are behind the delay in the release of the report," said Gordon McBean, an ACIA participant from the Institute for Catastrophic Loss Reduction at the University of Western Ontario. "They don't even think they ought to reduce their emissions, period." But to truly reduce the impact on the Arctic, global emissions have to be reduced by a whopping 50% before the year 2050, McBean told IPS. The Kyoto Protocol, which has not been ratified in the seven years since it was created because the U.S. and Russia, among others, will not support it, would reduce emissions a mere 5% by 2012. "Kyoto was just a first step, we need a strategy to get to a 50% reduction," McBean said.

Government inaction on climate change by Canada and the United States is due in large part to the failure of the general public to apply pressure on the issue, says Watt-Cloutier. "People don't seem to understand that what they do on a daily basis has a direct impact on the people and wildlife of the north," she said, adding that she hopes people will begin to see that their actions—their choice of vehicle, for example—can produce negative consequences for others and future generations. "People do want to do the right thing, but they just don't realize that the Arctic is melting and they are responsible," she said.

ARCTIC BUZZ

Earthweek

First Nation residents living far north of the Arctic Circle in Canada were puzzled by the appearance of an insect for which they had no name in their native Inuktitut language. Several yellow jacket wasps have been seen in various locations around the community of Arctic Bay, on the northern tip of Baffin Island and higher than 73 degrees latitude. Canadian entomologist Brian Brown at the Natural History Museum in Los Angeles, who identified the wasps after receiving a photograph of one from Arctic Bay's baffled mayor, said that the unprecedented appearance so far north could be a freak occurrence, or possibly a sign of climate change in the Arctic. He also warned the community of 700 not to touch any of them.

MUSSELS FOUND NEAR POLE IN GLOBAL WARMING SIGN

Reuters

Mussels have been found growing on the seabed just 800 miles from the North Pole in a likely sign of global warming, scientists said on Friday. The blue mussels, which normally favor warmer waters like off France or the eastern United States, were discovered last month off Norway's Svalbard archipelago in waters that are covered with ice most of the year.

"The climate is changing fast," said Geir Johnsen, a professor at the Norwegian University for Science and Technology who was among experts who found the bivalves. Mollusks were a "very good indicator that the climate is warming," he said.

"It seems like the mussels we found are two to three years old," he told Reuters. Such shellfish have not been recorded off the islands since Viking times 1,000 years ago during another warm period.

Inuit peoples in Canada, for instance, are seeing robins for the first time and hunters are falling through previously solid sea ice. In Scandinavia, birch trees are moving northwards into previously icy areas used for reindeer herding.

FBI'S ANTI-TERROR 'OCTOBER PLAN'

CBS

FBI officials here are preparing a massive counter-offensive of interrogations, surveillance and possible detentions they hope will disrupt possible terrorist plans regarding the November elections, reports CBS News Correspondent Jim Stewart.

FBI field offices and Homeland Security agencies will be advised of "extraordinary measures" that will go into place "beginning the first week of October through the elections."

Specifically, the plan calls for "aggressive—even obvious—surveillance" techniques to be used on a short list of people suspected of being terrorist sympathizers, but who have not committed a crime. Other "persons of interest," including their family members, may also be brought in for questioning, one source said.

Throwing hundreds of agents on the street and conducting invasive surveillance has become a standard post-9/11 tactic for the bureau, which hopes at a minimum to force terrorists go back into hiding and rethink their plan.

The bureau knows it can expect to be criticized for the strategy if it goes too far. One element of the plan calls for addressing what some officials fear could be a wave of protests from Arab-Americans and civil libertarians once the so-called "October Plan" kicks off.

JOHNNY RAMONE DEAD AT 55

From Undercover.com

Johnny Ramone, guitarist for the legendary Ramones, has died in his sleep at his home in Los Angeles after battling prostate cancer for the last five years.

The Ramones formed in New York City in 1974. They were a punk band before the term even existed, predating the Sex Pistols and leading the way for New York's new wave with bands like Blondie, Television and Talking Heads.

Drummer Tommy Ramone (Tom Erdelyi) is now the only surviving founding member although he left The Ramones in 1977.

LIBRARIANS WIN BATTLE

The Daily Cal

Following howls of protest from libraries across the nation, U.S. Attorney General John Ashcroft has rescinded a controversial order demanding that libraries destroy copies of a federal statute and accompanying regulations and documents.

The mandate in question was sent to libraries designated by Washington as official depositories, where federal statutes, regulations and other documents are routinely shipped in order to make them available to the general public.

"You don't want to mess with the public documents librarians. They are the pit bulls of democracy," said Patricia Ianuzzi, director of the Moffitt and Doe Libraries at UC Berkeley—the latter a designated federal depository.

Ianuzzi said she had never heard of the feds trying to recall copies of legislation enacted by Congress, as Ashcroft attempted to do with the Civil Asset Forfeiture Reform Act, which had been shipped off to depositories four years ago.

"I can only assume that the person who issued the order didn't know what they were doing," she said.

The other documents on the recall list, sent to librarians on July 20 by federal Superintendent of Documents Judith C. Russell, included Civil and Criminal Forfeiture Procedure, Select Criminal Forfeiture Forms, Select Federal Asset Forfeiture Statutes, and Asset Forfeiture and Money Laundering Resource Directory.

The reason for Russell's action? "The Department of Justice has determined that these materials are for internal use only," she wrote.

Under federal law, Russell is obliged to withdraw publications when requested by the agencies which had initially issued them, according to an article posted on LISNews.com, the website of Librarian & Information Science News.

Michael Gorman, president-elect of the American Library Association (ALA), blasted the Justice Department move.

"The topics addressed in the named documents include information on how citizens can retrieve items that may have been confiscated by the government during an investigation," he wrote in an official statement.

On learning of the mandatory withdrawal, the ALA filed a Freedom on Information Act request for the documents to force Ashcroft's agency into issuing a statement on the "unusual action."

David Dodd, an executive with the San Francisco Public Library and chair of the California Library Association's Intellectual Freedom Committee, said "the major effect on libraries by Mr. Ashcroft has been a raised awareness of potential threats to personal privacy, primarily via the portions of the PATRIOT Act (section 215 in particular) that give broad and unprecedented powers to the federal government.

"Many librarians are increasingly conscious of our roles as guardians of our users' privacy as an aspect of intellectual freedom—that is, the freedom to think and learn without fear of reprisal. This freedom is essential to the existence of a functioning, healthy democracy. And that's what libraries are all about."

Dodd said the initial destruction order was sent via email, and "several depository were holding off on compliance with the order to destroy the docs while they waited for the (official) paper notification."

The ALA's Michael Gorman noted in his July 30 statement that written notification had not yet been issued. The written order never came before the Justice Department capitulated.

Dodd praised Bernie Margolis at the Boston Public Library as "foremost among those speaking out and questioning the order."

Ianuzzi said that the public doesn't grasp the importance of free access to information, "and Republicans keep wanting to pull away from it."

While the Berkeley Public Library isn't an official depository, Director of Library Services Jackie Griffin, a member of Dodd's Intellectual Freedom committee, hailed the victory.

"Once more, the librarian was mightier than the Ashcroft," she quipped. "The American Library Association was all over it, and they capitulated." Griffin said "Librarians have been more politically active under John Ashcroft. In a way, you have to thank the man."

GENES FROM GMO GRASS SPREAD FOR MILES

from an article in the New York Times

A new study shows that genes from genetically engineered grass can spread much farther than previously known, a finding that raises questions about the straying of other plants altered through biotechnology and that could hurt the efforts of two companies to win approval for the first bioengineered grass.

The two companies, Monsanto and Scotts, have developed a strain of creeping bentgrass for use on golf courses that is resistant to the widely used herbicide Roundup. But the companies' plans have been opposed by some environmental groups as well as by the federal Forest Service and the Bureau of Land Management. Critics worry that the grass could spread to areas where it is not wanted or transfer its herbicide resistance to weedy relatives, creating superweeds that would be immune to the most widely used weed killer. The Forest Service said earlier this year that the grass "has the potential to adversely impact all 175 national forests and grasslands."

Because Scotts has plans to develop other varieties of bioengineered grasses for use on household lawns, the new findings could have implications well beyond the golf course. And the study suggests that some previous studies of the environmental impact of genetically modified plants have been too small to capture the full spread of altered genes.

In the new study, scientists with the Environmental Protection Agency found that the genetically engineered bentgrass pollinated test plants of the same species as far away as they measured—about 13 miles downwind from a test farm in Oregon. Natural growths of wild grass of a different species were pollinated by the gene-modified grass nearly nine miles away. "It's the longest distance gene-flow study that I know of," said Norman C. Ellstrand, an expert on this subject at the University of California, Riverside. "The gene really is essentially going to get out," he added. "What this study shows is it's going to get out a lot faster and a lot further than people anticipated."

One reason the grass pollen was detected so far downwind was the size of the farm—400 acres with thousands of plants. Most previous studies of gene flow have been done on far smaller fields, meaning there was less pollen and a lower chance that some would travel long distances. Those small studies, the new findings suggest, might not accurately reflect what would happen once a plant covers a large area.

The effort to commercialize the bentgrass has attracted attention because it raises issues somewhat different from those surrounding the existing genetically modified crops.

It would be the first real use of genetic engineering in a suburban setting, for example, rather than on farms. And the grass is perennial, while corn, soybeans, cotton and canola are planted anew each year, making them easier to control.

Bentgrass can also cross-pollinate with at least 12 other species of grass, while the existing crops, except for canola, have no wild relatives in the places they are grown in the United States. And crops like corn and soybeans have trouble surviving off the farm, while grass can easily survive in the wild. The bentgrass, moreover, besides having very light pollen—a cloud can be seen rising from grass farms—has very light seeds that disperse readily in the wind. It can also reproduce asexually using stems that creep along the ground and establish new roots, giving rise to its name.

The questions about the grass come after Monsanto, which is based in St. Louis, said earlier this year that it was dropping its effort to introduce the world's first genetically engineered wheat, citing concerns by farmers that its use in foods might face market opposition.

EU APPROVES BIOTECH SEEDS

Reuters

The European Union approved on Sept. 8 the first biotech seeds for planting and sale across EU territory, flying in the face of widespread consumer resistance to genetically modified (GM) crops and foods. The commission authorized 17 different seed strains of maize engineered by US biotech giant. The parent maize seed, known as MON 810, has been engineered to resist certain insects.

Adrian Bebb, who campaigns against genetically altered food for the environmental group Friends of the Earth Europe (FoE) said the decision to list the 17 varieties in the common European catalog of varieties of agricultural plants was unwise because most member countries have not yet passed rules on how genetically modified crops and conventional crops should co-exist.

The move angered greens, who say it is irresponsible to allow the widespread use of GMO seeds while many EU countries have no laws on how farmers should separate organic, GMO and conventional crops to minimize cross-contamination.

Friends of the Earth described the decision as "a recipe for disaster," saying it would cause widespread contamination of Europe's food, farming and environment and remove consumers' ability to avoid GMOs.

Polls show that more than 70 percent of European consumers oppose biotech foods because of health and environment worries.

WAL-MART BEATEN

Canadian Press

A Quebec labor board has rejected retail giant Wal-Mart's challenges to the unionization of one of its stores in the province.

Wal-Mart was contesting the composition of the bargaining unit but the decision by the Commission des relations de travail du Quebec upholds the list of employees submitted by the union.

The United Food and Commercial Workers Union presented signed cards in July from more than half of the eligible workers at the store in Saguenay, about 250 kilometers north of Quebec City. The store has about 150 workers.

Wal-Mart had proposed a longer list of prospective union members in an effort to reduce the majority of support.

Despite the disagreement over the composition of the membership, the labor board accredited the union Aug. 2 because it met the required criteria.

"People are very happy," Marie-Josee Lemieux, president of the local union, said Friday in a telephone interview. "We were euphoric Aug. 2 and that has been reconfirmed today. People are relieved."

She said the Wal-Mart workers in Saguenay could become a source of hope for the labor movement across North America. "When we are determined, courageous, convinced, we can change things," she added.

According to Lemieux the union is now preparing to negotiate with the world's largest department store.

Roch Landriault, spokesman for Wal-Mart in Quebec, was "disappointed" by the decision.

If the accreditation stands, the Saguenay store could become the only unionized Wal-Mart in North America. Some butchers working for Wal-Marts in the United States are union members but Wal-Mart is contesting that decision.

Similar storewide union drives are underway in Ontario, Saskatchewan, Manitoba and British Columbia.

TEOTIHUACAN PYRAMIDS AND WAL-MART FACE TO FACE

Asheville Global Report

About a mile from the heart of the Mexican archaeological zone of Teotihuacan and its awe-inspiring pyramids, the US-based retail giant Wal-Mart is overcoming the resistance of a group of local residents and, to the amazement of the United Nations, is building one of its supermarkets.

The new store going in near the Teotihuacan citadel, 30 miles north of Mexico City, is 80% complete, and is being built on land where a vibrant culture whose history is still full of enigmas flourished hundreds of years ago.

"We'll put a stop to this with demolition, because a transnational corporation can't just come and trample on our historical patrimony," said Lorenzo Trujillo, head of the Civic Front for the Defense of the Valley of Teotihuacan, a group that represents some 100 local residents from the area around the world-renowned archaeological zone.

With the backing of municipal permits and authorization from the National Institute of Archaeology and History, Wal-Mart is building its new store on a 4-acre plot of land which forms part of the nearly 1,200 acres that are left of Tollan Teotihuacan, an indigenous name that means "Where Men Become Gods." The store's neighbors are the Pyramids of the Sun and the Moon, the numerous temples and the Avenue of the Dead in Teotihuacan, estimated to be more than 1,400 years old.

In response to the Civic Front's protests, the governmental National Council for Culture and the Arts promised that it would review the legal aspects of the project, about which it claims to have received no prior notice before construction began.

In late July, around 50 members of the Civic Front, which is mainly made up of peasant farmers, teachers and a few owners of small local businesses, occupied the building site for three days, demanding that construction be brought to a halt. The protest ended peacefully, but the construction work continued, and a few days later Wal-Mart called for trials of those who occupied "its property."

"The Teotihuacan community is divided, that's true, but those who believe in the defense of our history, culture and identity will fight to the very end to prevent a transnational corporation from stealing our history," said Trujillo.

The National Council for Culture and the Arts said it would examine the building permits, and would block completion of the new store if irregularities were found.

After the Civic Front filed complaints and the authorities investigated, the incomplete construction sites of two shopping centers were demolished in 1993 and 1997, not far from where the new Wal-Mart store is going in.

When it laid the foundations of its new store, Wal-Mart reported that a private archaeologist it hired found just a few isolated artifacts, like a ceramic container and an arrowhead.

But Trujillo said that could not possibly be true. "We are from this piace, and we know that there is much more than that beneath the ground in this area," he argued.

Teotihuacan is a religious citadel built at the dawn of the Christian era. The city reached its peak of splendor between the years 450 and 600 AC, but by the year 700, the local residents had left the area for unknown reasons.

The name Teotihuacán came from the Aztecs, who discovered the abandoned buildings around the year 1300.

Impressed by what they had found, the Aztecs thought the pyramids had been built by giants with the help of the gods, according to historians.

POLISARIO WILL NOT GIVE UP

infoshop.org

(Polisario—Army of Western Sahara, which fights the Moroccan and (for four years) the Mauritanian occupation of Western Sahara, an occupation that started in 1975 (for Mauritania until 1979).

Polisario was formed in 1973, as a reaction towards several broken promises on Saharan independence from the Spanish colonalist regime. While the exact numbers of the troops are not known, most estimates set it at around 10,000.

Polisario had so much success fighting Mauritania, which for the first years was the main enemy, that the occupation ended on this side. But despite the peace treaty between the two parties, signed in 1979, the southern third of Western Sahara was passed on to the far stronger Morocco. Morocco has since then managed to fight off Polisario, apparently now for good, as a 1,600 km long sand wall has been built along the border, making it very difficult for Polisario's army to pass. The result has been the UN peace plan of 1988, that in reality has given Morocco a carte blanche in the region, and the proposed referendum on the future of Western Sahara, has been put off time after time for the last 12 years.]

The Polisario peoples of Morocco are making it clear that they will not rule out a return to armed struggle if the Moroccan regime doesn't accept a referendum of self-determination for the Saharawis. One day after the recent visit to Algeria by the Spanish head of government José Luis Rodríguez Zapatero, when he defended a "just and definitive" solution for the Saharawis "within the framework of international legality" but voiced doubt over the validity of James Baker's peace plan, the Polisario representative in Algiers—Mohamed Yeslem—pointed out that at the end of the coming October the mandate of the UN Mission for a Referendum in Western Sahara—also known as MINURSO—will expire and "Morocco will have to give a definitive response to the peace proposals." Yeslem warned that if that doesn't happen, "if Morocco maintains that the referendum of self-determination is an 'expired' affair, it will be have to be declared implicitly that the present ceasefire also has expired." The ceasefire was signed in September 1991. Yeslem asked the United Nations Security Council to demand that Morocco accept a referendum of self-determination for the Saharawis, as has been established in the last resolutions passed by this body.

The Polisario leader called on Spain and France to "show the Saharawi people justice and fairness to the same extent that they defend the right of the Palestinian people to obtain a state." Polisario and Algeria believe that Spain has moved closer to the Moroccan and French view and warn that the Sahara crisis can have no other solution outside the framework of self-determination, because the conflict is "essentially colonial in nature."

The United States' public position on the Western Sahara is confused although its actions have allowed Morocco to maintain colonial control over the Western Sahara.

When King Mohammed VI of Morocco and US President George W. Bush met recently they jointly called for a quick settlement of the Sahara issue. Both leaders "agreed on the need to resolve the Western Sahara problem as soon as possible in a manner that best enhances the security and prosperity of the people of Morocco, Algeria, and Mauritania," White House press secretary, Scott Mclellan, said. Specifics of what that meant were lacking.

In 2002, The Bush administration pressured members of the UN Security Council to impose the „Framework Agreement" on the people of Western Sahara. The US circulated a draft resolution to members of the UN Security Council that would have imposed the Framework Accord on the people of Western Sahara. The Framework Agreement, if adopted, would have effectively given Morocco sovereignty over Western Sahara and denied the people of Western Sahara the right to self-determination.

Last year Bush urged King Mohamed VI of Morocco to commit himself to compromise on the status of Western Sahara when the King visited Washington in September — while assuring him that the US will not seek to "impose a solution."

In fact, the US has stood by silent as its Moroccan ally consolidated control over the region to become the last colonial power on the African continent. The king's only real ally in the United Nations is France, but it is the US' silent acceptance of whatever he wants do to that has allowed him to thumb his nose at the world. As long as King Mohammed VI can keep the United States in line, he will remain intransigent.

Bush has actually said virtually nothing about the Saharawi in public and done everything from declaring Morocco a "major non-NATO ally" to leading the charge for a US-Moroccan Free Trade Agreement to give the King the impression that we aren't about to do anything at all about the way he acts in his own neighborhood.

ANARCHIST REPORT FROM MOSCOW

By Rainbow Keepers/from Infoshop.org

Our government organized demonstrations in various Russian cities with theme "Russia against terror—together we will be victorious!" Various celebrities were inviting people to meetings on television every half an hour, and in several cities all mobile phone users got spam SMS messages. The Moscow demonstration was officially organized by the pro-government trade union and independently from executive powers, but there is little doubt who really paid the bills.

Anarchists from Rainbow Keepers, Moscow Union of Radical Artists and other groups decided to join Moscow demonstration, especially since it was organized in an exceptionally suitable place, right next to the residence of the leading terrorist of Russia in Kreml. Many workers and students were sent to the demonstration during working hours (although no doubt many came on their own as well), so the demo gathered tens of thousands of people. The 130,000 claimed by officials may be an exaggeration, but 100,000 would not be an unrealistic number. Vasilevsky embankment was crowded with people, as well as Bolshoy Kamenniy Bridge over Moskva river. At least 4,000 police and besides them conscripts were organized for security, we had to pass three security checks in order to get to the meeting. Fortunately they did not pay attention to our banners, leaflets and buttons.

Since our message (our main banner being "We are all hostages of a terrorist state") was slightly different from the official one, this was again an action I was wondering how many teeth I would have left afterwards. Some people from liberal Committee of Antiwar Action came to support us; together we were maybe 25, so numbers were a bit uneven.

First we saw some orthodox christian fundamentalists, and we went to raise our banner in front of them in order to annoy them. But there our banner was not really visible, not to talk about placards, so we moved close to the exit from the square towards Kitay-Gorod. This was an excellent place, since hundreds, perhaps thousands, of people saw our placards when leaving the demonstration. Some did not agreed with us a lot, and a couple of times a fight was near. Cops managed to grab our banner and tear down few placards, but one of the arrested was unarrested and two others liberated themselves. In the end noone was arrested, and cops backed up since we argued that we came to demonstrate against terror as well. In the end there were plenty of angry people, cops and suspicious types one of whom had an SS button, so we decided to leave in an organized group. There were plenty of far-right people around; in Kitay-Gorod we saw a bunch of boneheads. This day their message was not much different from the mainstream. We did not paid much of attention to speeches, but every third word seemed to be "derzhava" (superpower) or "pobeda" (victory).

We had planned some shouts such as "State is the main terrorist" and "No to war in Iraq and Chechnya", but we kept quiet since they did not really fit to the mood of the event which was not that of aggression, although that obviously was the original intention of organizers. Although the state was obviously up for a patriot showoff, a big part of the people were there more for sorrow than for a fight. I would guess some people would be even disappointed for the event, they came with candles but in the end officials were playing militarist marching music. Some critical banners besides ours were around ("Putin, you promised to flush them down the toilet, now they are flushing us"); a few people came to shake our hands and to ask when the next anti-war action will happen.

We distributed around 700 copies of our leaflet, and several hundred leaflets of the anarcho-syndicalists.

RUSSIAN ASSAULT ON PRESS DURING BESLAN CRISIS

Compiled by Shawn Gaynor/Asheville Global Report

As the hostage crisis in Beslan unfolded several outspoken Russian journalists attempting to report on the story were interfered with by both state authorities and unknown assailants.

The incidents happened as the panic-stricken Russian officials tried to play down the siege, claiming there were as few as 300 people in the school. Anna Politkovskaya, one of the most outspoken critics of Vladimir Putin's policy on Chechnya, was on her way to the siege in Beslan from Moscow when she collapsed mysteriously.

According to the Moscow Times, "Politkovskaya was flying from Vnukovo Airport to Rostov-on-Don and fainted on the plane. Immediately after landing, she was taken to a local hospital, where doctors found she had been poisoned, Novaya Gazeta editor Dmitry Muratov told the New York-based Committee to Protect Journalists."

Writing for the Guardian this week, Politkovskaya told how the nurse in the hospital she was taken to had told her she had been poisoned. "The nurse tells me that when they brought me in I was 'almost hopeless.' Then she whispers, 'My dear, they tried to poison you.' All the tests taken at the airport have been destroyed—on orders 'from on high,' say the doctors."

Politkovskaya has written repeatedly about Russia's brutal war in Chechnya, much to the fury of the Putin regime. She claims to have seen video footage that shows Chechen prisoners being treated the same way as those in Abu Ghraib prison in Iraq but says no Russian TV channel would show it. When her paper published pictures no other papers followed up the story.

Andrei Babitsky, of US sponsored Radio Liberty, was arrested at Moscow's Vnukovo airport on Sept. 3 and stopped from flying south as police searched his bag, claiming he might have explosives. After they had finished, two strangers came up and started a scuffle. They and Babitsky were detained and Babitsky was charged with hooliganism. The next day he was sentenced to five days in prison.

Politkovskaya and Babitsky, both award-winning reporters known for hard-hitting coverage of the Kremlin's war in Chechnya, believe they were prevented by the Russian government from reaching Beslan.

Press freedom organization Reporters without Borders also reported that two employees of the independent Georgian TV station Rustavi 2, Nana Lezhava and cameraman Levan Tetvadze, were held by the Beslan police.

Nana Lezhava of Rustavi-2 said she had slept for 24 hours while in the custody of the Russian authorities after being given coffee in her cell, and felt ill when she woke up. "On Monday evening I was offered coffee. I drank it and woke up only at 8pm next day. I don't remember how I was carried into the isolation ward of federal security service," she said in the interview.

Gela Lezhava, the head of the oversight board at a Georgian drug research institute, told a news conference that urine samples taken from the reporter showed traces of tranquillizers.

Russian authorities detained the Moscow bureau chief of the satellite TV channel al-Arabiya Sept. 7 on his way to Moscow from Beslan, where he was covering the hostage crisis. Amro Abdel Hamid, an Egyptian who holds Russian citizenship, was stopped at the airport in the southern Russian city of Mineralniye Vody, according to reports.

The events were followed by the apparent sacking of Izvestia's editor, Raf Shakirov, in the wake of graphic accounts of the disaster in the newspaper.

The Sept. 4 issue of privately-owned Izvestia featured shocking pictures of wounded and dead children and other victims of the hostage crisis. Izvestia was one of the first Russian media outlets to cast doubt on the government's now disproved claim that only about 350 hostages were being held captive in the school—less than a third of the actual number. Now it seems Shakirov may have lost his job over the line his paper took.

Commenting on Shakirov's dismissal, Viktor Loshak, the editor of the popular magazine Ogonyok, told the radio station: "This scares me because we are moving far away from the country that we had been trying to build for the past 10 years."

Since Putin assumed the presidency in 2000, he has muzzled all four major television channels, turning daily TV news programs into a parade of positive stories about the government and his daily agenda, critics say. The printed press, on the other hand, has been freer to criticize the government.

Some analysts fear the Russian government may further tighten its grip following the school siege and other attacks in recent days blamed on Chechen separatists.

BUSH SIGNS WESTERN SHOSHONE LEGISLATION

TRIBAL LEADERS VIEW BILL AS MASSIVE LAND FRAUD

By Jerry Reynolds / Indian Country Today

One of the largest ongoing seizures of Indian land in modern times will move forward following President George W. Bush's signing of the Western Shoshone Distribution Bill on July 7.

Under provisions of the bill, Western Shoshone claims to 24 million acres of land in Nevada, Utah, California and Idaho, based on the Ruby Valley Treaty of 1863, are officially subsumed through payment by the U.S. government. The bill will forcibly distribute approximately $145 million in funds awarded the tribe by the Indian Land Claims Commission. Most of it will go to 6,000 or so eligible tribal members, with a separate revenue stream set aside for educational purposes.

The commission acted on findings that following the Ruby Valley Treaty, which permitted non-Indian miners access to the tribal lands, a "gradual encroachment" took place that supposedly nullified the treaty. According to the government the "gradual encroachment" theory obviated any need for official cession of land by sovereign Western Shoshone governments, a sticking point to this day with foes of the funds distribution.

The commission based its original $27 million award (enacted by its successor organization, U.S. Court of Federal Claims) on land valuation in effect in 1872—15 cents an acre, with no interest on the loss over time.

Because acceptance of the award would create the perception that any claims to their land have been relinquished, the majority of Western Shoshone governments have steadfastly refused the money. Despite the July 7 signing, several Western Shoshone tribes and tribal members said they would continue to rely on the Ruby Valley Treaty to press their land claims.

This has never been easy for them. Another sticking point in the process of seizure has been a court ruling that the tribe could not litigate the award once its trustee, the Interior Department, accepted receipt of it.

Although tribal sovereignty is not vested in individuals but in tribes, Congress has relied on individual votes, cast in rather stage-managed proceedings, to determine that a "majority" of Western Shoshone tribal members favor distribution of funds and the resulting extinction of their land claims. Sen. Harry Reid, D-Nev., and his Republican ally in the House of Representatives, fellow Nevadan James Gibbons, persuaded their colleagues to pass the embattled bill mainly on the strength of vote tallies in proceedings that had no official sanctioning process across all the Western Shoshone tribes, but concentrated on Nevada tribes.

The Ruby Valley Treaty lands are rich in resources, including gold, water and geothermal energy. Multinational mining companies are standing by to operate within the Ruby Valley lands through "privatization" bills brought forward by Gibbons. Gibbons and Reid are among Congress' leading recipients of mining company contributions.

In addition, President Bush has designated Yucca Mountain, a site within the Ruby Valley lands, as the nation's nuclear waste repository.

In a statement of dissenting views attached to the distribution bill, signed by six members of the House, the claim continues to be made that no proof has been provided of Bush administration claims that a "vast majority" of Western Shoshone favor distribution of funds.

In any case, sovereignty is vested in tribal government, not individuals. According to the bill's more vocal Western Shoshone opponents, the one former Western Shoshone tribal governmental leader who had testified in behalf of distribution did so over the opposition of a majority of his council, which passed a resolution refuting his testimony. A "Western Shoshone Claims Steering Committee," heavily relied on by Reid and Gibbons in producing a show of tribal support for distribution, has all the appearance of a shadow government, having been declared null and void by a resolution of the recognized government—all this again now part of recent historical record.

The distribution will take place in defiance of at least eight resolutions against it among the Western Shoshone tribes. The National Congress of American Indians, the Organization of American States, and the United Nations have also weighed in against the distribution.

Western Shoshone resistance will clearly continue. "It's not over," said Mary Gibson, a tribal member. "We still exist and we still have our rights to our land. It makes me sad and angry that myths continue to cloud the truth in this country. This struggle isn't a Shoshone versus Shoshone battle—the underlying issue here is the U.S. responsibility and accountability for a treaty with the Western Shoshone Nation. As long as the people in the U.S. allow this to happen it will continue to happen."

Raymond Yowell, of the Western Shoshone National Council, described himself as "utterly disappointed. It's unbelievable that the U.S. body that makes the laws has acted in this manner. The fight is not over. A fraud is a fraud—individuals cannot sell out a nation and the bill, although a threat politically, does nothing to change our inherent rights or our treaty rights. Congress and the President were informed of all the facts that touch upon this issue. We will use the Treaty of Ruby Valley to stop Yucca Mountain and to protect our lands. Our title is still intact.

"The self-described, private group who pushed for this money are not members of any federally recognized council and have no authority to speak on behalf of our tribe or the Western Shoshone Nation. The Nevada legislators and the Bush administration have been well advised of this fact. The way this legislation was handled makes an absolute sham of the stated government-to-government relationship and responsibility of the U.S. government."

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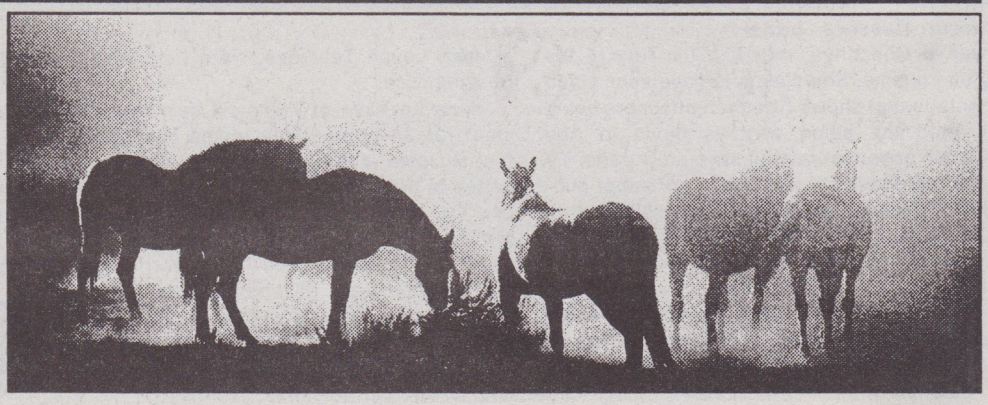


WHO SEIZED SIMONA TORRETTA?

From a piece by Naomi Klein and Jeremy Scahill in Z magazine

When Simona Torretta returned to Baghdad in March 2003, in the midst of the "shock and awe" aerial bombardment, her Iraqi friends greeted her by telling her she was nuts. "They were just so surprised to see me. They said, 'Why are you coming here? Go back to Italy. Are you crazy?'"

But Torretta didn't go back. She stayed throughout the invasion, continuing the humanitarian work she began in 1996, when she first visited Iraq with her anti-sanctions NGO, A Bridge to Baghdad.

Today, Torretta's life is in danger, along with the lives of her fellow Italian aid worker Simona Pari, and their Iraqi colleagues Raad Ali Abdul Azziz and Mahnouz Bassam, after the four were snatched at gunpoint from their home/office in Baghdad. In the absence of direct communication from their abductors, political controversy swirls round the incident. Proponents of the war are using it to paint peaceniks as naive, blithely supporting a resistance that answers international solidarity with kidnappings and beheadings. Meanwhile, a growing number of Islamic leaders are hinting that the raid on A Bridge to Baghdad was not the work of mujahideen, but of foreign intelligence agencies out to discredit the resistance.

Nothing about this kidnapping fits the pattern of other abductions. Most are opportunistic attacks on treacherous stretches of road. Torretta and her colleagues were coldly hunted down in their home. And while mujahideen in Iraq scrupulously hide their identities, making sure to wrap their faces in scarves, these kidnappers were bare-faced and clean-shaven, some in business suits. One assailant was addressed by the others as "sir".

Kidnap victims have overwhelmingly been men, yet three of these four are women. Witnesses say the gunmen questioned staff in the building until the Simonas were identified by name, and that Mahnouz Bassam, an Iraqi woman, was dragged screaming by her headscarf, a shocking religious transgression for an attack supposedly carried out in the name of Islam.

Most extraordinary was the size of the operation: rather than the usual three or four fighters, 20 armed men pulled up to the house in broad daylight, seemingly unconcerned about being caught. Only blocks from the heavily patrolled Green Zone, the whole operation went off with no interference from Iraqi police or US military—although Newsweek reported that "about 15 minutes afterwards, an American Humvee convoy passed hardly a block away".

And then there were the weapons. The attackers were armed with AK-47s, shotguns, pistols with silencers and stun guns—hardly the mujahideen's standard-issue rusty Kalashnikovs. Strangest of all is this detail: witnesses said that several attackers wore Iraqi National Guard uniforms and identified themselves as working for Ayad Allawi, the interim prime minister.

An Iraqi government spokesperson denied that Allawi's office was involved. But Sabah Kadhim, a spokesperson for the interior ministry, conceded that the kidnappers "were wearing military uniforms and flak jackets". So was this a kidnapping by the resistance or a covert police operation? Or was it something worse: a revival of Saddam's mukhabarat disappearances, when agents would arrest enemies of the regime, never to be heard from again? Who could have pulled off such a coordinated operation—and who stands to benefit from an attack on this anti-war NGO?

On Monday, the Italian press began reporting on one possible answer. Sheikh Abdul Salam al-Kubaisi, from Iraq's leading Sunni cleric organization, told reporters in Baghdad that he received a visit from Torretta and Pari the day before the kidnap. "They were scared," the cleric said. "They told me that someone threatened them." Asked who was behind the threats, al-Kubaisi replied: "We suspect some foreign intelligence."

Blaming unpopular resistance attacks on CIA or Mossad conspiracies is idle chatter in Baghdad, but coming from Kubaisi, the claim carries unusual weight; he has ties with a range of resistance groups and has brokered the release of several hostages. Kubaisi's allegations have been widely reported in Arab media, as well as in Italy, but have been absent from the English-language press.

Western journalists are loath to talk about spies for fear of being labeled conspiracy theorists. But spies and covert operations are not a conspiracy in Iraq; they are a daily reality. According to CIA deputy director James L Pavitt, "Baghdad is home to the largest CIA station since the Vietnam war", with 500 to 600 agents on the ground. Allawi himself is a lifelong spook who has worked with MI6, the CIA and the mukhabarat, specializing in removing enemies of the regime.

A Bridge to Baghdad has been unapologetic in its opposition to the occupation regime. During the siege of Fallujah in April, it coordinated risky humanitarian missions. US forces had sealed the road to Fallujah and banished the press as they prepared to punish the entire city for the gruesome killings of four Blackwater mercenaries. In August, when US marines laid siege to Najaf, A Bridge to Baghdad again went where the occupation forces wanted no witnesses. And the day before their kidnapping, Torretta and Pari told Kubaisi that they were planning yet another high-risk mission to Fallujah.

Since their abduction, pleas for their release have crossed all geographical, religious and cultural lines. The Palestinian group Islamic Jihad, Hizbullah, the International Association of Islamic Scholars and several Iraqi resistance groups have all voiced outrage. A resistance group in Fallujah said the kidnap suggests "collaboration with foreign forces." Yet some voices are conspicuous by their absence: the White House and the office of Prime Minister Ayad Allawi. Neither has said a word.

What we do know is this: if this hostage-taking ends in bloodshed, Washington, Rome and their Iraqi surrogates will be quick to use the tragedy to justify the brutal occupation—an occupation that Simona Torretta, Simona Pari, Raad Ali Abdul Azziz and Mahnouz Bassam risked their lives to oppose. And we will be left wondering whether that was the plan all along.

REAGAN RISES FROM GRAVE! AAAAAAHHHH!

from an article in the New York Times

The Bush administration has proposed reducing the value of subsidized-housing vouchers given to poor residents in New York City next year, with even bigger cuts planned for some urban areas in New England. The proposal is based on a disputed new formula that averages higher rents in big cities with those of suburban areas, which tend to have lower costs.

The proposals could have a "significantly detrimental impact" in some areas by forcing poor families to pay hundreds of extra dollars per month in rent, according to United States Representative Christopher Shays, a Connecticut Republican. That extra burden could be too much for thousands of tenants, "potentially leaving them homeless," Mr. Shays wrote in a recent letter to the Department of Housing and Urban Development.

"Like hurricanes in the Atlantic, assaults on the housing voucher program by the Bush administration have been unrelenting," wrote Sheila Crowley, president of the National Low Income Housing Coalition, in the group's most recent weekly newsletter to its 5,000 members. "Any program will break apart if battered hard and often enough. If the program can be so destabilized that landlords, lenders and developers will give up on it, it will much easier to cut down."

WHAT EVER HAPPENED TO

This was an endurance protest, lasting almost an entire week with protracted standoffs with the police where you could go get a sandwich, eat it, and come back to see the same scene unchanged. Where the Anti-War-Action marches in San Francisco in 2003 were fast paced runs through the city, where shit was getting thrown around and anything could happen, the RNC protests seemed relatively predictable after a few days in New York. There was a steady flow of mass arrests. There were many small climaxes of unwarranted, brutal police violence every night. But there were also moments where the throngs of protestors moving down some Manhattan avenue seemed to gel—where the chaos and disorganization of a hundred groups planning a hundred different actions faded in the rising unity of people who were all angry at the same Republican Party and on the streets for the same reason: to raise hell.

The police presence was oppressive, in every sense of the word. Aside from the NYPD's fleet of helicopters, the police made use of the Fujifilm blimp for surveillance. Cops were pulled in to Manhattan from the other boroughs of the city with the majority of the buildup in Midtown in the few blocks around Madison Square Garden, where the RNC was being held. On at least two of the handful of occasions where I asked a cop for directions the response I got showed they were just as confused about their surroundings as I was. "I don't fucking know. I'm from Queens," one said.

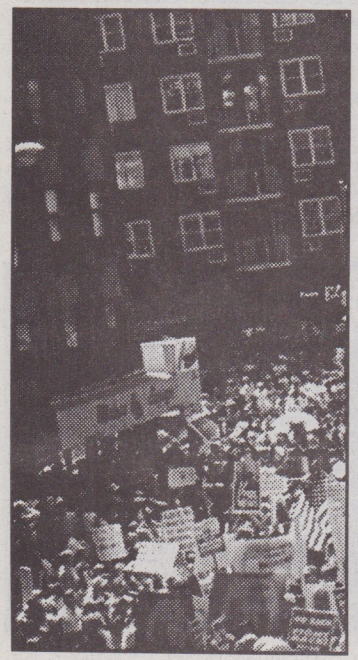
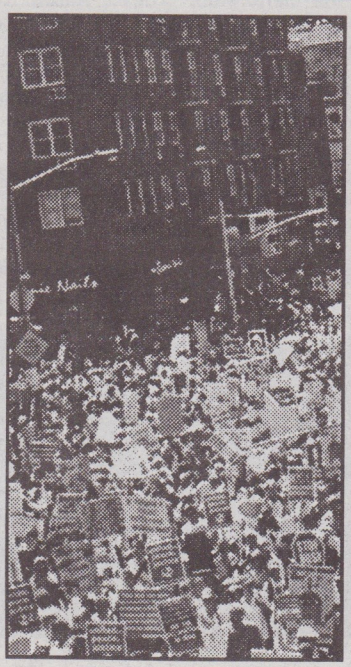
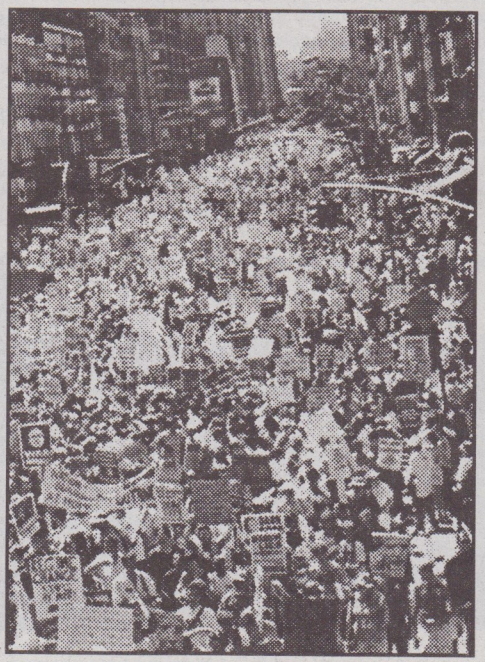
I arrived in town the Friday before the week of the protests and, as my plane touched down at JFK, I received a phone call from a friend from San Francisco. She was in the East Village. The background was filled with yelling, police on a megaphone, static, the oscillating thud of helicopter blades. "Where are you?" she asked, explaining that the monthly Critical Mass ride had just ended with 260 arrests and a standoff in front of St. Mark's Church, where hundreds of bicyclists had fled to avoid arrest. Not knowing where I was, where the East Village was, or how to get there I hopped in a taxi and had the driver take me to 10th Street and 2nd Avenue, to St Mark's. In the first 15 minutes in the yard of the church, under the streaming halogen light of the helicopter on the harmless crowd of kids with bicycles, I ran into multiple people from the Bay Area.

The flood of people into New York City had been consistent in the weeks and days leading up to the RNC. It was obvious at the tail end of the Critical Mass ride, which was four or five times its normal size, peaking at 2000 or so riders. St. Mark's was a sanctuary for people throughout the entire week, providing almost 24-hour access to bathrooms, water, and a safe place to sit and talk. The night before the A31 actions, it served as a meeting place for jail solidarity trainings. Food Not Bombs and another group set up a kitchen in the side yard and fed people the entire week. The crowd at St. Marks, complete with anarcho-punx and hippies stood in contrast to the large numbers of people that came out for Sunday's United For Peace and Justice march.

Approaching Union Square, the designated jumping off point for the march, there seemed only a few hundred people in front of the stage that UFPJ had set up. The group was denied a permit for a rally in Central Park, following the march, so they had decided to have a rally before the march. People were wandering all over the place, from street to street, as they waited for everyone to start moving. I was not impressed. From my notes: "The UFPJ people are passing a collection bucket but they're not getting a fucking dime from me. I only pay for things when I know I'll get my money's worth." It seemed I would not. But, an hour later on 7th Avenue I climbed up two stories of scaffolding next to a building. The scene was amazing—the avenue filled with people, without the beginning or the end in sight, with an estimated 500,000 people on the street.

Much smaller, unpermitted protests and actions began later Sunday night. Skye and Kirsten, two people from San Francisco I was running around with for most of the week, had cell phones and had signed up with a free service called Txtmob (www.txtmob.com) that facilitates sending text messages to hundreds of cell phones. From their website you could add your phone to any number of groups that had been set up prior to the convention. There were groups for medics, A31 actions, general info, and a dozen others that covered various aspects of communication.

The first action that the text messages led us to was outside of the Boathouse in Central Park. There were a couple hundred people and a few dozen cops outside when we arrived. Delegates arrived in buses chartered from their Midtown hotels and stepped out onto the tree lined street behind police barricades and into the swank reception. The usual chants from the protestors were heard: "RNC out of NYC" and "The people united will never be defeated" (which didn't sit right with me due to my fondness of Sham 69) among others. What struck me about the week in general and the scene outside the Boathouse in particular was the number of corporate media photographers and reporters. When a few of them arrived they stood around like gawkers at the scene of an accident and then quickly became as bored as I was. It was obvious here that the police would have their way. The protestors were more than compliant and moved whenever the police asked them to. As we were leaving, two photographers packed up their things and muttered something about a press reception

OLD NEW YORK?

A Report From The RNC Protests. By J. T. Hutton. Photos by Hannah Sorensen

and free food.

We had our own party to go to as a friend from Oakland had relocated to New York to take a job painting some sort of new age spiritual chapel. The party, at the chapel on the fourth floor of a building on West 27th Street in Chelsea, was filled with people dressed something like Hare Krishnas. Our friend, a graffiti legend in San Francisco was occupied, wasted, dancing with a fat, middle-aged woman and explaining the chapel. We climbed onto the roof. The skyline was impressive but immensely more interesting than that were the members of Lynyrd Skynyrd standing on the street below us. It seemed that another RNC event was unfolding in the building across the street, with the southern rock band playing a show for the delegates billed as "A Tribute to Southern Leadership". We left our rooftop to investigate.

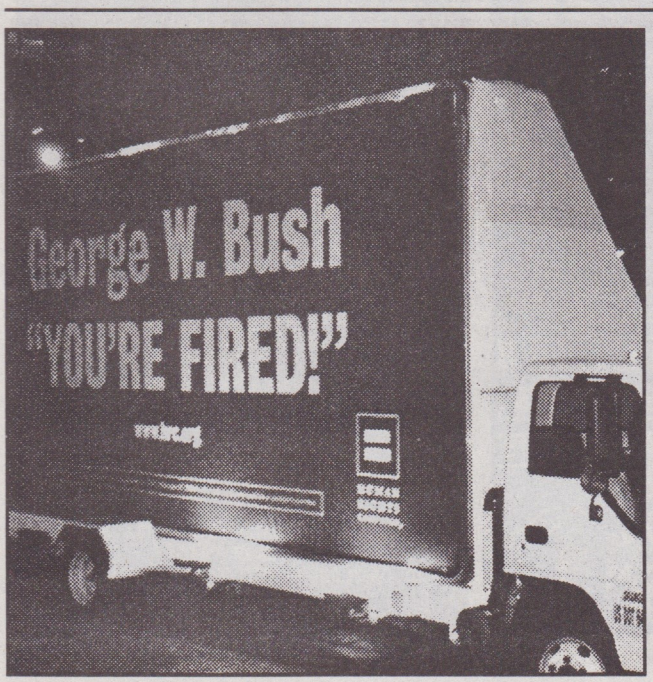
The protestors were only 20 strong on our side of the street as the show ended and the delegates stumbled drunk out of the Crobar. The police here were surprisingly nice and chatted with us, even partook in talking shit about the Republican horde. "These people aren't New Yorkers," one cop told me, "I'll be happy when they're gone." The event proved wonderful for heckling and fashion advice. "Did your daddy get you your job?" one kid next to me yelled to an awkwardly dressed 20-something Republican on the other side of the street. The Republican just stared back, confirming the kid's most inane Republican stereotype. We were both kind of shocked. The night wound down with no fewer than two drunks wandering to our side of the street to try to start a fight. They didn't do anything, rather waited for the cops to grab them and pull them back to the other side of the street—and they're lucky…

Our brief camaraderie with the police ended the next night with the Poor People's March that cut up 8th Avenue to 29th Street. At 29th the police stopped the advance of the march which was an estimated 5000 strong taking up three blocks of street as it moved. His motives unknown, an undercover cop on a scooter drove into the crowd, knocking over at least one protestor. A protestor, reportedly the brother of Jam Master J from Run-DMC, punched the plainclothes cop, knocking him unconscious. At this point all hell broke loose. Strings of riot cops ran through the crowd in the intersection. All the pictures I took in the melee were a mess of hands, backs of heads, police helmets, and batons. As I stepped onto the sidewalk the crowd I was in was quickly run down by a group of cops holding a steel barricade. They pushed backward on the sidewalk for half a block, jabbing us with batons and slamming the barricade into us.

The next day, Tuesday August 31st, was the day slated for direct action against the conference. I hooked up with a friend from California named Mike, who was acting as a street medic during the convention. Packs of street medics, mostly registered EMTs, went wherever the action was to help the wounded and dehydrated. I knew that I would get to the craziest scenes of carnage and police brutality if I hung out with this guy, so I followed him to the New York Public Library. Nobody told me what was happening, but later I came to find out that there was supposed to be a banner drop from the front of the library that was foiled by the NYPD. Regardless, large numbers of people showed and the police quickly declared that the plaza in front of the library was closed and began shoving people out onto the sidewalk. Then, they made a megaphone announcement stating that the protestors were blocking the sidewalk and they had to "move along" or get arrested. This was the same line of shit I heard all week whenever groups of two or more people with free speech on their mind and a little anger in their gut stood on the sidewalk in public.

Fortunately, the people cleared out and headed immediately for Herald Square, a small swath of land between Broadway and 6th Avenue at 34th Street. People flooded the street taking 34th Street, then 33rd Street. MSNBC was broadcasting live the entire time, with Chris Matthews looking quite confused as thousands of people yelled in the street around him, riot cops double-timed it up and down Broadway and helicopters whizzed above. Quite a lot of arrests were made. Undercover cops were everywhere, riding cute little scooters and trotting up and down the sidewalk. They were clearly identified by the sweat bands on their wrists, a different color for each day. Mobs of protestors randomly moving up and down the streets in the area, a block away from Madison Square Garden, were quickly, and brutally, arrested if they were small in number. I couldn't tell you how long actions went on for that night. We stayed out as late as we could and Skye and Kirsten's phones kept buzzing with new text messages.

The next night there were about 200 people outside of Central Booking on Centre Street, downtown. People who were arrested were sent to Pier 57, a space with no seating and a floor covered in motor oil, for 24 to 72 hours or longer in some cases. The National Lawyers' Guild attorneys, who were representing the protestors arrested the entire week, were trying to get a hearing at 1 a.m. to get a writ issued to speed the release of the protestors. Things seemed to be moving incredibly slowly with one person released every 30 minutes and over 1200 people arrested in less than a week. The City of New York was later held in contempt of the Supreme Court of New York for their misconduct.



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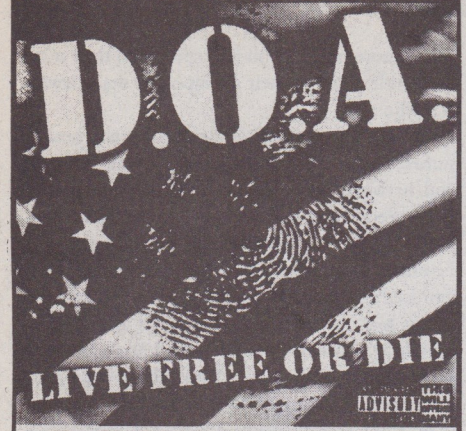

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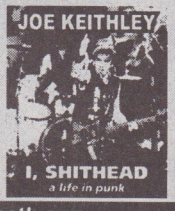

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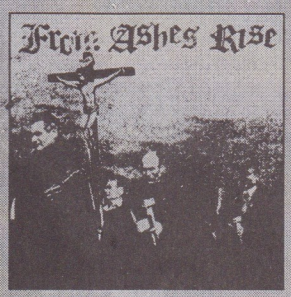

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DS 13 Aborted Teen Generation
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The 717 — Harrisburg/York/Lancaster, Pennsylvania

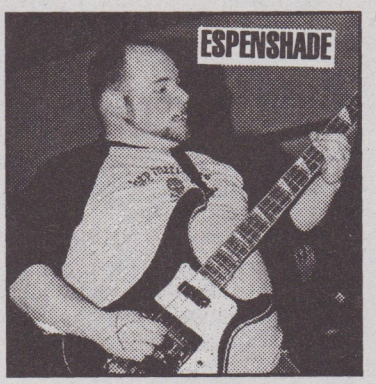
Harrisburg, PA and it's surrounding areas do not really jump out as being a punk rock haven, but as anyone can tell a small scene can grow and develop anywhere if the people in the area truly care about what is going on around them. Sure people talk about the good old days here, when 7 Seconds and the Circle Jerks would have played at various halls, and how they have videos of Green Day playing in someone's basement on their first tour, but we'll try to focus on what's going on today. I think it's still pretty amazing.

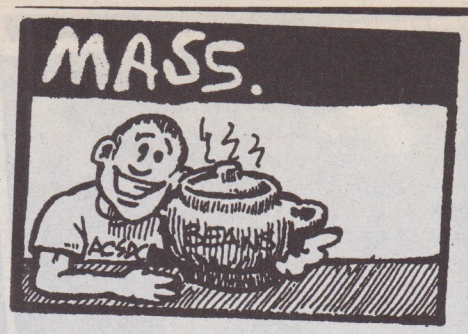
First I'll start off with some of the bands in the area… THOSE WHO REMAIN are an old school youth crew styled hardcore band. Featuring members of many other local bands, it is kind of an all-star band if you will. Their name comes from the five guys basically being the only straight edge kids around. They have a split 7" with Richmond hardcore band Ten 33 coming out this fall. VAN DAMAGE features members of Those Who Remain and Derringer and play fast thrashy hardcore. You will seriously think it's 1985 when listening to them. They also have a 7" coming out this fall. DERRINGER are from Lancaster and play a mix of old school hardcore and metal similar to Converge. They just released a full length on Zero Velocity Records out of Philly, and are one of the best live bands out there. DECONTROL, not the one from Canada, are a punk band that has been around for several years. They have a sound similar to Aus-Rotten mixed with From Ashes Rise, and have toured all over the East Coast. Their new record should be out soon. ESPENSHADE are an indie band from Harrisburg who sound similar to Braid or Mock Orange. Their guitarist Chris is sick and can play ever single Slayer song if you ask. They all look like huge lumberjacks too. Lumberjacks playing wussy indie? THE COMMERCIALS have been around for years, and used to sound like Screeching Weasel. Now they have a similar sound to like Texas Is The Reason or Jimmy Eat World, and have a release on Blackout! Records. EDEN PARK has probably been around longer than any other band around here with something like 10 plus years. They are very unique mixing punk, hardcore, jazz, thrash, and anything else you want to through into the mix. Super fun live band that even has a trampoline on stage. LOSERS AND KINGS are a punk rock n roll band from the area, which features ex members of No Ones Hero and Poorboy. Their fairly new to the scene but seem to have a pretty good following. They even do a Cure cover! KAMAKAZIE ZERO features ex Virus lead singer Paul. Although, they sound nothing like the Virus. This time it's straight rock n roll. Paul has an awesome voice, and I can see them getting pretty big. RUNNING FROM DHARMA have been around quite awhile, and toured with the likes of Shelter and Sensefield. They have a melodic hardcore sound and have a full length out on CI Records. LUCK BE THE LADY features ex Boywunder singer Eric, and play fast metal hardcore. They should be huge right now considering all the bands of the similar style. ALLISON HILL features Andy from The Commercials and various other people from many other central PA bands. They are pretty emo. Right. AUGUST BURNS RED are a metal band from Lancaster. They just got a new singer and are extremely talented for how young they are. They have an EP out on CI Records. GENOVESE are a hardcore metal band from the Lebanon area. They book several shows, and like to "bring the mosh." SADARAHU are a screamy hardcore punk band from Lancaster. Their drummer is awesome. And they like to "get sexy." They have a full length out on CI Records. JURA is an awesome two piece band featuring a singer/guitarist and drummer. They have a very Refused kind of style to them. Definitely one of the best bands in the area.

Venues come and go… With just about every venue in the area getting shut down for numerous stupid reasons. A bunch of people got together with one common goal. Open a real venue for the kids in this scene. No more renting halls, no more getting bitched at by neighbors. Thus, CHAMPION SHIP was born. A total DIY venue, for the kids, by the kids. Holds about 500 people and is pretty much the best thing in the area. A lot of the promoters in the area book here now. www.championshippa.com FAT PAUL has been booking shows for years in York. He likes skateboarding, and even has shows at his house (complete with mini ramp). He put out the Carpenter Ant 7" too. pointbforgood@hotmail.com MC has booked shows all over Harrisburg and York. Pretty much bigger punk bands such as the Varukers, the Unseen, Roger Miret, and River City Rebels. Mcdecontrol@hotmail.com CHARLIE runs a booking company called Keystone booking, and books tours for bands as well as doing many local shows. Charlie@keystonebooking.com LOWER PAXTON YOUTH CENTER does a few shows a month and is a non-profit organization. They also host vegan dinners once a month. Www.lowerpaxtonyouthcenter.com/

Where you should spend your money… CHAMPION SHIP is also an independent record store. Since the kids in the scene run the store, the selection is pretty awesome. Only a few months old but the selection is growing everyday. They can pretty much order just about anything you want too. With the closing of Besides Records in Mechanicsburg, Champion Ship is the only indie store in the Harrisburg area. www.championshippa.com ANGRY YOUNG AND POOR is a punk rock mega store. Before Hot Topics, there was AYP. Located in Lancaster, their selection is way better than Hot Topics' any day. www.angryyoungandpoor.com CI RECORDS is not only a record label but also a record store and skate shop. They used to have a shop in Philly too, but I think it's just the Relapse store now. If you're in Lancaster stop on by, but the old location was way better in my opinion. www.cirecords.com NEATO BURRITO is basically the best burrito shop in the world. There are three locations in Harrisburg, New Cumberland, and Lemoyne. If you want a burrito the size of your head, this is the place to go. They have many vegan and vegetarian options too.

A few other things I'd like to mention… TOM GILK PRODUCTIONS is a video company run by a guy named Brandon, who films a lot of the shows around here. He put together a bunch of them together for the "717" DVD which is out now. You can buy the DVD and check out some of his other projects on his website. www.tomgilkproductions.cjb.net OUT HERE ALONE is a website that sponsors the scene with show listings, contests, message boards, and even put out a compilation featuring central PA bands. The second installment of the comp is set to come out early 2005. www.outherealone.com



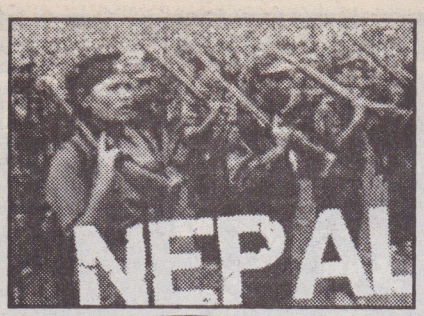


The fall is coming. In fact, by the time this gets to all you fine folks, we will probably be knee deep in orange and brown leaves and college students. Of course, the latter may bring high rental costs and random puddles of puke on various sidewalks around the city, but they also bring a new crowd of kids to attend shows, buy records, and fuel the best punk and hardcore scene in the country.

I'd like to start this scene report off with an update on the venue situation, which has always been an ever-shifting problem for as long as I could remember. The ALL ASIA CAFÉ, which for the past year had hosted some of the best local and touring, punk and hardcore bands, has thrown their hands in the air and cried "Done!" Occasionally I see a flyer for a metal show or "rock" punk show there, but they no longer host regular punk shows or matinees. A media frenzy ensued when the owners ignored a bleeding patron, sustained from running face first into someone else's broken bottle at a hip-hop show. This will go down in the history books as the only time when punk kids were not responsible for the ending of shows at a venue. The CENTRAL SQUARE ELKS LODGE, which for a good part of the year was the biggest all ages hardcore venue in Boston has stopped doing shows because...well, I don't know why exactly. But I can tell you this much, Jimmy Flynn, the man with the plan at the C.S.E.L, is glad it's done and I personally feel the shows at the Elk's were doing nothing more than lining the pockets of the gentleman who runs it. FNS has lucked out and found a huge, all-ages, with bar venue in Boston with the POLISH AMERICAN CITIZENS CLUB. This 300 capacity venue is perfect for touring acts and big drawing locals. Some upcoming shows there are 9/9-THE VIRUS, 9/19- INEPSY, 9/21-SKITSYSTEM, and 9/25-LEFTOVER CRACK. Unfortunately, it is too big for smaller, local endeavors, but the fine folk at HUTCH'S BASEMENT and BLOODSTAINS ACROSS SOMERVILLE have picked up the slack and are hosting smaller touring bands like the recent DAMAGE DEPOSIT show, and some great local acts like THE VICIOUS BASTARDS, THE SIDE EFFECTS (featuring ex-STATISTICS/UNSEEN guitarist "Chainsaw"), THE DEAD OUTLAWS (new 7" out soon on FNS Records!), FOR THE WORSE, DEFCON 4, POSITIVE REINFORCEMENT, SLEEPER CELL (who have a new 7" out!), FRUIT SALAD, TERMINAL YOUTH, SOLITARY NEGLECT and lots more! The two other basement houses that had shows were closed due to police intervention. Also, REGENERATION has been trudging away just two blocks from my house on Harvard Ave. in Allston, getting ready to open their door hopefully on the anniversary of the opening of the original REGEN, September 4th. This version will be a record store, tattoo studio, and small (capacity=80?) show space. Having spoken to the one of the proprietors, Ross Noyes, who is also a member of local punk acts THE SIRENS (2 new 7"s out this month!) and THE REFUSENIKS, yesterday while checking out the progress, it seems hopes are high for a fully functioning punk compound by the beginning of September. As I stated before, the Boston scene is forever shifting and...well, regenerating itself. With the opening of a new punk shop, there is the inevitable closing of another. SECOND COMING RECORDS, which for 2 years has been the best punk record shop in the city, will be closing its doors for good. Mike Welfare (who also runs Welfare Records) plans on seeking a larger store space and re-opening his doors at a better location within the next year. All of us in Boston wish him the best of luck! But, he will continue to run Welfare Records, which has released records by THE KNOX, THE STRUGGLE, THE CONTRARY, and TOMMY AND THE TERRORS (Congratulations Anders!). Also, he has upcoming releases by CONCRETE FACELIFT (the best old-school skate-core band in MA and RI) and possibly PURE IMPACT. Teenage Disco Blood Bath Records, run by the illustrious JONAH BLOODBATH has been sponsoring shows at a hall in Brookline and this weekend catered to all KYLESA fans in the area. This hall is in a very ritzy neighborhood. Hopefully no one fucks it up because it's so accessible! T.D.B Records is also stepping up it's releases after the success of their first record the RAISE THE CURTAIN/OLD SARUM split 12", with a release of Jonah's band AS LONG AS WE'RE ALL LIVING, WE'RE ALL DYING. Other releases have been popping up left and right. BONES BRIGADE had 2 new releases lately-their one sided 7" and their split with Canada's DFA. Both are filled with yummy thrash goodness. CLOSE CALL has also joined the *one-sided 7"* club with a new 1/2EP on Roxbury's Painkiller Records, who have had and will have releases from THE A-TEAM (RIP), THE PROWL, MINDERASER, Cleveland's CIDER, BREATHING FIRE, and HARM'S WAY. CUT THE SHIT, who released a one sided 7" earlier this year, have a new 10" out on Albany's Gloom Records. Buy it! Mike McCarthy, Boston's wildman, turned pro-wrestler returned earlier this year with his newest band FOR THE WORSE. Bridge 9 Records, one of the most well known hardcore labels in the US has released a new CD and 7", *The Chaos Continues*. Check 'em out or die. Buddies and sometimes wrestling partners DEFCON 4, are putting out a new 7" on Robin's (guitarist) label Ammonia Records as a split with local "rock" punkers CRASH AND BURN. Up until now they have been known for their track on some video game and being replacments for the leaving members of the UNSEEN. The Lockin Out Crew have been busy lately by releasing numerous records and touring constantly. The eBayer *Will Have Their Say!* MENTAL has released their newest 7" titled *YO* with some of the goofiest art I've ever seen. They also just returned from a month long tour of Europe where apparently, the merch table was mobbed from the start of the show until the finish. Lockin Out has also released the vinyl version of RIGHTOUS JAMS new full length *Rage of Discipline*. I'm sure you like these guys and make sure you check out their demo that was pressed on vinyl by a Belgium label. RAMPAGE's demo has also been pressed onto wax, and is kind of a stretch from what is the Lockin Out norm-check it out. Moo Cow records has also been busy putting out 7"'s from TALK HARD, TERMINAL YOUTH and FRUIT SALAD. These guys are another one of the many hardworking punk/hardcore labels in Boston.

There are lots and lots of new killer bands in Boston and the next scene report will be a little more in-depth. To find out what's going on in Boston you can try these resources: www.fnsboston.net www.lockinout.com www.bridge9.com www.bostonpunk.org wwww.board.honeypump.net

Thanks Pat FNS



Namaste! This is RAI KO RIS with an update of the situation in Nepal and a small bit about the DIY punk activities here. "Small" because it really is; we're not kidding! (Please treat this as an update from the last report we made in another zine called *Ganyang* from Malaysia because a lot has changed since then.)

We've done a couple of DIY benefit gigs this year already. At each gig, usually 50 *rupees* admission price, we raise money for free-food activities (we travel around town at night giving out food we make at home), and we just started a sponsorship for a ten-year old kid from our village whose father died and mother is mentally ill. We have a kind of loose collective of people involved in the gigs and bring any cases forward that need a donation or collection for local causes. At the next gig, we even plan to do a small demonstration around the tourist ghetto to raise awareness about child prostitution and pedophilia that is common in Kathmandu.

So far, we've had some very interesting guest speakers at the shows. We had Milan Rai, an anarchist and anti-war activist from the UK who founded *Voices in the Wilderness UK*, a sanctions-breaking group who worked hard throughout the 90s. Milan went to Iraq repeatedly and was one of two Britons to be arrested for distributing medicine to children's hospitals; this activity was illegal at the time as sanctions were imposed on Iraq. Milan has since formed an anti-war organization *Justice Not Vengeance* and wrote the books, *Chomsky's Politics*, *War Plan Iraq –Tten reasons not to go to war in Iraq*, and the sequel *Regime Unchanged*. For more info: www.voicesuk.org and www.justicenotvengeance.org

Nepal's branch of *Amnesty International* gave a small presentation at a gig. We had their "Stop Violence Against Women" posters all around, and above the stage area. (We have a tiny stage at the Buddha Bar where we hold our gigs.) They made it clear to all that if we were unlawfully arrested and tortured by any army or police personnel, we could contact them for support to put pressure on authorities to stop this practice.

Richard Corbridge, who co-founded *Reason To Believe*, a DIY, HC punk zine and Armed With Anger Records, gave a small talk about his involvement with the DIY network in the UK. Richard is currently a volunteer in Nepal with a small grassroots HIV/AIDS organization in Kathmandu.

Bands involved in DIY gigs with RAI KO RIS include: JUSTICE NOWHERE-trio, slow thrashing hardcore, and socially charged lyrics. They just started so they only have about six or seven songs. However, the lead guitar/vocalist, Khadga Ghale, is a very inspired young man and will continue this great band-we hope! He is the younger brother of RAI KO RIS' last guitarist Bodh Ghale-who has now gone abroad. PROPAGANJA–we always bill them as "punky reggae skunks." They were 13 year-old little snot-nosed teen skaters from the American school when we first met them at our shows in 2000. Now they're lanky, dread-locked albino Rastas with a lot of good reggae tunes, with fun and socially aware lyrics. Rob plays ska-esque rhythms on guitar and Niels accompanies him with these beautiful bass lines. SLIMBOY SAM-blues harp, is an American guy that's been living in Nepal a long time, runs a recording studio, and has been involved with the BEASTIE BOYS' Free Tibet activities. He's always willing to play his many harmonicas at our DIY gigs. He has a bunch of harps in a little bag, all different keys, and he just blows you away. SHANNON SCAM–this band played at the last gig. Really nice guys–Balesh, Georgie, and Santos-and are all Limbu, an ethnic tribe like the Rai, from the Eastern Himalayas. The name of their band comes from a biography called *Mr. Nice Guy*, which is about an herb dealer in the seventies. This was one of his *scams* when transporting marijuana is my guess? Anyway, these guys had been practicing for some months and came up with some good, melodic, punk-screamo songs. The bass player didn't have the time to commit so now they sometimes jam with RAI KO RIS. Balesh and Georgie are becoming pretty active and we're all collectively starting a zine soon. We'll let you know when it comes out. You can contact Shannon Scam at BLIMBU@yahoo.com

We also sell photocopies of zines from all over the world, hand out flyers, and info. sheets at our gigs. If you have any distro/label info., etc, feel free to send it to us at: S.Rai, C/o NK Rai, PO Box 21778, Kathmandu, Nepal. Email: raikoris@mail.com.np

For our website and online zine, *Himalayan Frostbite*, with news on recent political events and other articles, visit www.geocities.com/raikoris

Update of the political situation in Nepal, May 2004.

In the capital, Kathmandu, there are demonstrations, protests, and the inevitable police brutality that always follows this type of thing everyday. Mainstream political parties are fighting peacefully (and errr…sometimes with bricks and stones!) for the nomination of a government composed of peoples' representatives (previously elected MP's party members). These mainstream parties are therefore against *regression*, meaning the King (including the generals who he bows down to) because he dissolved parliament and has been handpicking his own Prime Ministers since October 2002-in order for the army to do what it wants–the usual slaughter and rape! This also appears to be the plan of the USA and India who wish to control Nepal economically or for their own gains.

(Remember, the old King was assassinated in the *Royal Palace Massacre*, probably with a very bright green light from those super power countries. We believe this was because he was reluctant to send the army to fight against the Maoist guerrillas and instead wanted to negotiate with them-people whom he considered as his "subjects." Contrast this with the funny smoking a little bit of marijuana one night).

These problems on the streets of Kathmandu that you may have heard about in your news makes us laugh because it is the mainstream political parties who were the original reason why farmers in the hills took up their arms. The mainstream parties in the past have been full of corruption and dominated by the Brahmin Hindu caste group of the Himalayas (originally from India, like the King), and have granted all the wealth from donors and businesses to Kathmandu, with no regard for most of the population of Nepal who live in the rural area.

Meanwhile, the guerrilla movement of the underground communist *Maoists* continues. This *revolution* began in 1996 when the party went underground because their fellow party members were jailed for their beliefs (communism). They joined other farmers in arms and began their *people's war*. Their demands include abolishing the Hindu caste system and feudalism, having a Republic, instead of the situation now where the King is the head of State and army, and ending the *beggar economy* of Nepal based on donations from foreign NGOs. The mainstream political parties have been happily using them as a safety net for years, receiving large portions of money into their own pockets.

However, it is not necessarily a peaceful movement. It's very DIY, homemade guns and bombs type thing, and targeted killings of traitors. In the past, people in the city used to talk about our corrupt bastard leaders and say, "Somebody aught to shoot 'em all." Now that people are, everyone's freaking out and chanting

"peace and security." So, that is why most of the rich citizens of Kathmandu are pleased with the army and police presence, with their guns and ignorance on our streets—guns that have also gone off *accidentally* maiming a few here and there passers by.

Note: traveling is still fine. Contact us for details.

The Maoist movement is growing, not only because of their military might and supremacy of guerrilla war tactics, but also their political agenda is active. They continually send articles to the mainstream press (their own papers & presses and zines have been completely banned and destroyed by the state), and believe that if there continues to be a stalemate between the three factions (i.e. the Maoists, the mainstream parties, and the King), it will only encourage foreign intervention. They also stated that the mainstream parties should better be careful when negotiating with the King, especially if the King offers cheap, non-long-term solutions. Maoist leaders say that instead, the mainstream parties should politically align with them so that there are better chances for a clear-cut republic.

On the other side, the army is still terrorizing civilians in the villages since they can hardly catch any Maoist combatants. This only encourages the villagers to join the communist guerrillas who then grow as much as the army is involved.

The mainstream parties protesting in Kathmandu have pretty much said they are OK with sharing power with the King and have cleverly stated to the King that they will not cry for a Republic like the Maoists, if the King reinstates one of *them* as Prime Minister. This is pure blackmail for cheap success. During a mock student union election, it was clear that the majority voted for a Republic, similar to the Maoists). However, the mainstream political parties do not dare to mention "Republic" because their pockets are fattened by the USA, India, and others, and are pushing for a Constitutional Monarchy. This will mean new laws have to be signed and approved by the King, and he is still recognized as the head of the army. Also, the King will keep his privileges as the "royal idiot with lots of cash." With the King at the top, these foreign powers keep things as *they* wish them to be. With a Republic, Nepal will be doing things differently. There will definitely be more control of foreign intervention, investments, and influence. This poses a massive threat to America and other imperialists who don't want our country to be the exception in their globalized, imperialist democracy. If you don't believe us, look at Haiti and other Central or South American nations.

The USA, India, and Britain are already training the Royal Nepalese Army (RNA) and have donated or sold hundreds of weapons (M16 rifles), as well as provided armed helicopters with night vision (easier to slaughter innocent villagers), army gear, etc. Meanwhile, donor agencies are continuing to pour in aid, despite their lame demands for *humanitarian concerns*. I think they're more concerned that if a Republic does happen, it will be much harder for them to control Nepal, and they might have to pack up their exclusive American Center and British barbeque brunches on a Sunday, and give up their big houses, cars, and servants that they acquired while doing *aid* work in poor countries. GW Bush has pledged twenty million dollars for Nepal's *insurgency problem*. I think Congress only voted for ten million. *Only*? Ha-Ha!

In India's recent elections, the Hindu Nationalist extremist party lost power (yeah!) and now it's an alliance between center-right & left parties (headed by Italian born Sonia Ghandi!). So there is a slight hope that this new government in our neighboring country will stop backing the army generals here maintaining full power.

The USA has branded the Maoists in Nepal as "*The third most dangerous terrorists in the world*." Here in Nepal everybody laughed and then opposed this statement (including mainstream people) because this is a politically motivated movement run by farmers and nothing close to terrorism, whatever the heck it is. Also, branding them terrorists will just put oil on the fire rather than working toward negotiations and a political solution to the conflict. Also, it affects tourism, a major source of national income. Most terrorists are political though, aren't they? And, most oppose the USA, so let's just take the branding as the usual fear of *those dreaded red commies* like the old days when people were less aware and were scared shitless by these words used by government propaganda. Though, DIY zines do exist telling people the same thing we're telling you. Keep close to the truth.

Keep it going.

RAI KO RIS

To summarize:

As usual, the national as well as the international press/media focus on tiny little happenings of the capital where the real actual happenings are everywhere in the country, except in Kathmandu, which is just a little playground for many a rich Nepali and many very rich foreigners. We do not necessarily condone all the violence by the Maoists either, but for truth, we want to give it to you plain and simply rather than overt, capitalist, propaganda that dominates the mainstream media.

Latest update, beginning June 2004:

Since the past couple of weeks, while under pressure, the PM, Mr. Thapa, resigned. This took place sometime in May and three weeks later the King nominated another one after the demonstrating political parties failed to propose a common candidate for the post (aaaarrrgggghhhhhh!!!!!). The newly appointed (not elected) PM is a well-known figure in Kathmandu. He was sacked of the same post in October 2002 by the King and is part of a group of politicians that have been sharing power since 1990 and led the country to where it is now.

The main difference between him and the previous PM is that he is not from the King's party but from the congress party (equivalent of any rightist party). Before being appointed, he spoke in favor of a constituent assembly, a key demand of the Maoist movement, but later took back his words as soon as he was reinstated saying that he has to think differently now that he is PM again (...???...No comment).

Anyhow, the guy is trying these days to include in his ministers' cabinet members of all the political parties that used to be part of the parliament. Otherwise, it looks like this new PM doesn't have any power at all and seems to be ordered what to do by the Royal Palace-meaning the army here with the US and UK-so it is very doubtful that he is thought to be credible by the Maoists (whose military and political branches work and decide together).

A very ironic thing happened here when last week some US Marines officers trained some Nepalese army officers in *Human Rights* and awarded certificates of participation to soldiers. It sounded like a joke with the recent conduct of US personnel towards its prisoners in Iraq.

Amnesty International declared Nepal as the place that had the biggest number of disappearances in the world in the last year-thanks to US training sessions maybe?!

Freshly appointed Indian Foreign Minister came for a one-day express visit to Kathmandu. As usual, the public here is not informed of what he discussed with the King, the new PM, and various political leaders. Some leaks suggest that India is willing to support the Nepalese army more to fight the Maoist revolutionary movement. Keeping in mind that India's main concern is that the Nepalese army does not import too many weapons from the UK and US, otherwise it would become too dangerous of a little neighbor for the big giant state.

In Kathmandu, four out of the five parties who were protesting are still doing so, saying that the new PM was nominated by the King and not chosen by these parties, therefore the King is continuing an unconstitutional ruling.

Mr. Padma Tuladhar, facilitator in the past between the government and the Maoists during negotiations, stated that the new PM has already killed the idea of any possible negotiations with the Maoists when he declared that, "National elections will be held by next year and talks on the constituent assembly are not on the agenda." That is not very good news since the main, self-declared task of the new government is to hold negotiations with the revolutionary movement.

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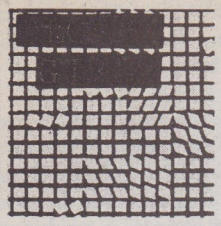

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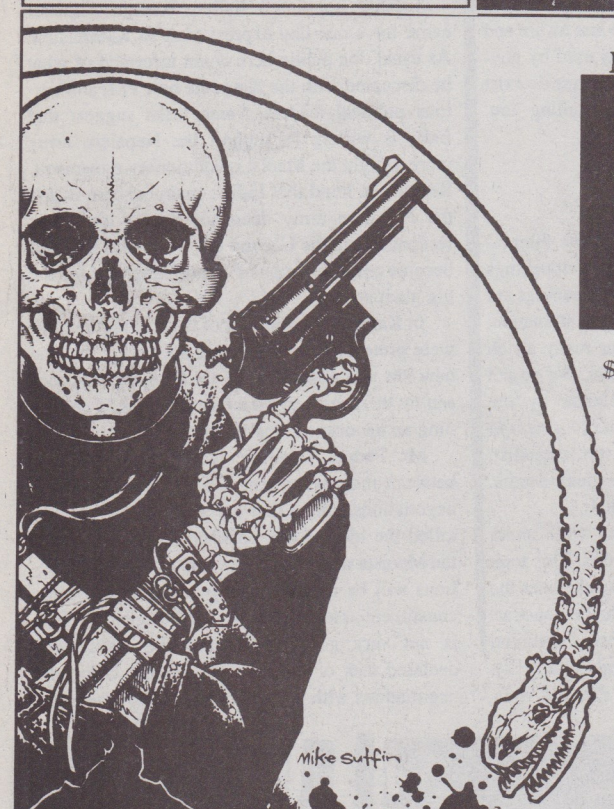

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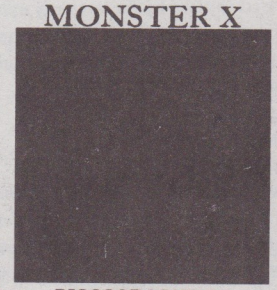

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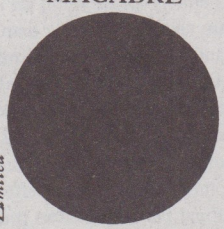

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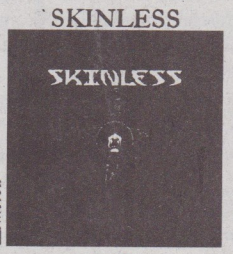

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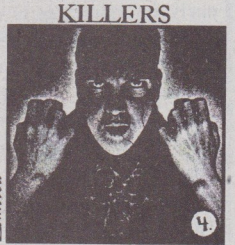

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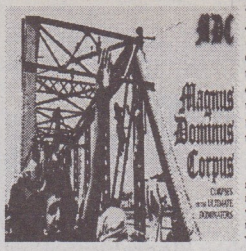

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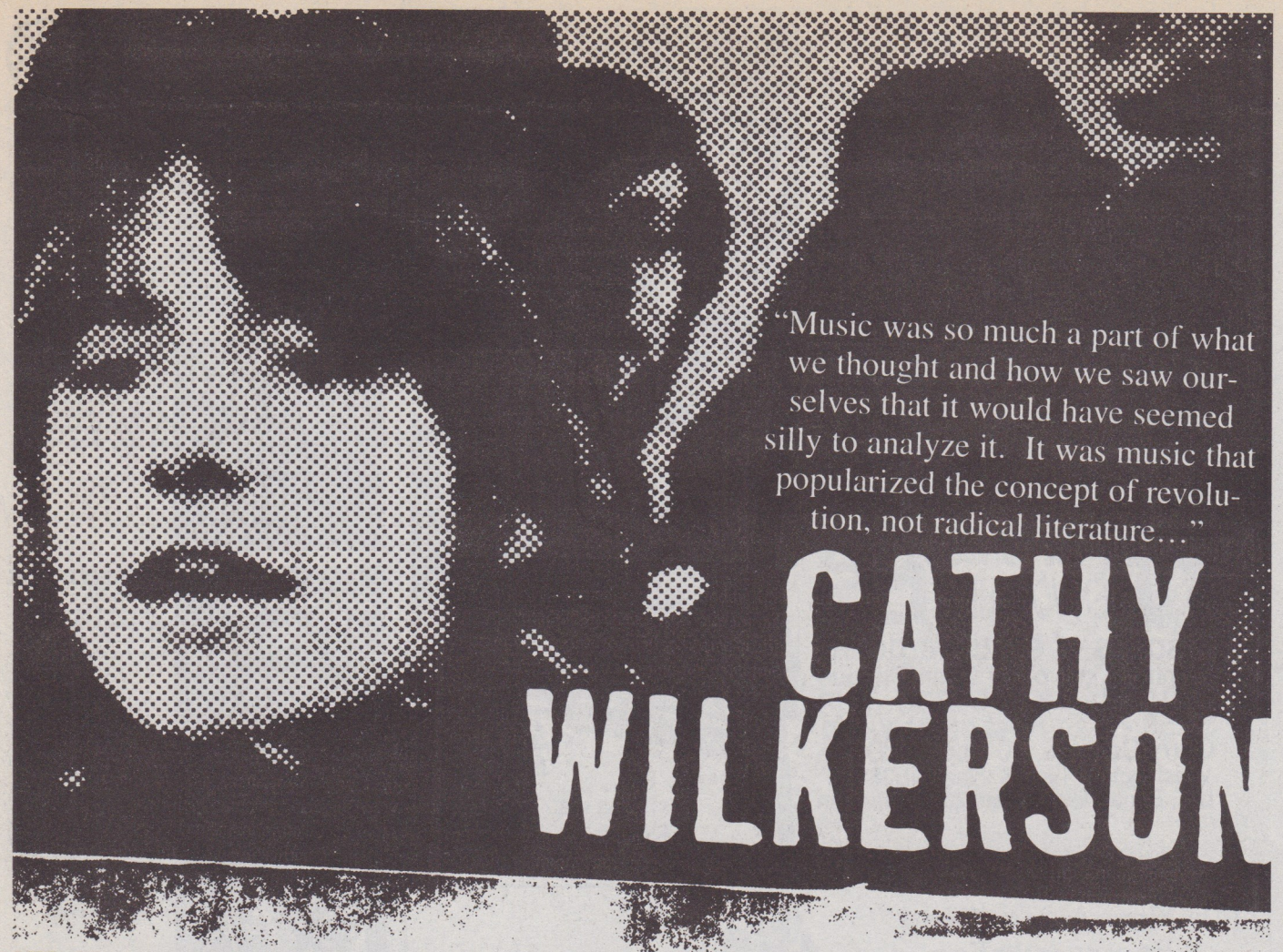


"Music was so much a part of what we thought and how we saw ourselves that it would have seemed silly to analyze it. It was music that popularized the concept of revolution, not radical literature..."

CATHY WILKERSON

MRR: When you were growing up, was your family inclined towards left politics? Did you grow up in a progressive household?

Cathy Wilkerson: My family was Republicans and in 7th grade I wore a lot of "I Like Ike" buttons. They raised us to value a strong family, hard work, social responsibility, belief in the equality of all people and in the importance of a level playing field of opportunity. They also placed a great value on curiosity and exploration of ideas, people and places. My family's values have stayed with me, but my understanding about economic and political history is now very different, and so my beliefs about how to best act on my values are very different.

MRR: At what point did you start thinking about politics or global issues? Was it in college or before?

Cathy Wilkerson: I began to find an explicitly political language in poetry in high school—through the Wordsworth and Sandburg I read in school and the Beat poets and folk and rock lyrics that traveled in the youth underground. It was here that I first heard of the anti-nuclear, union and civil rights movements.

MRR: How did you become active in your politics? Could you talk a little about the Woolworth's protest in Chester? Did that directly lead you to get involved with SDS? How were you familiar with them?

Cathy Wilkerson: I went to college at Swarthmore in Pennsylvania and in 1963—the spring of my freshman year— got organized to go to Cambridge, Maryland to support attempts to integrate public facilities and to end employment discrimination. The older Swarthmore activists who led the Swarthmore contingent were among the founding members of SDS and had been at Port Huron. In the fall of my sophomore year they again organized me to participate in a picket line outside of a run-down, segregated school in near-by Chester. We were all arrested and held overnight. From there I became very involved in the Chester project, part of what became SDS' Economic Research and Action Projects (ERAP) for the rest of that year.

MRR: What was it about SDS that made them more appealing than other progressive groups at the time? What are some of your happier memories with the group? I guess what I'm trying to ask is, was it all work or was it fun at all? It's really hard to tell from different people's accounts...

Cathy Wilkerson: One of the main appeals of SDS was that it was a lot of fun. After growing into adolescence in the 1950s where behavior and beliefs were rigidly ruled by unspoken social expectations based on race, class and gender—with enforcement by family, social cliques and high consequence taboos—to find a community in which diversity was celebrated and tolerance for all kinds of unconventional behavior was a protected norm, it was like dying and going to heaven. Of course class, race and gender issues were still there, but there was space to challenge. The culture was defined by the fact that we *knew* we had broken free and taken charge. National SDS meetings were the most striking because in smaller chapters particular cultures of rebellion could dominate – but on a national level the diversity ruled. We worked hard and partied hard in an infinite range of expressions.

MRR: Were you already familiar with feminist politics before SDS? What inspired you towards feminism at the time?

Cathy Wilkerson: Many of the first feminist activists of the mid and late 60s were a few years older than I and many had far more knowledge of or experience with progressive activism than I had. For younger women like me, the opening up of opportunities by SDS was so overwhelming that it took a while to sort out the sexism that was also embedded in the experience. I was introduced to feminism by women who started reading and talking about the issue in the mid 60s, and then later met in small groups by 1967. Most specifically, I was engaged by Marilyn Webb who lived in Washington DC where I also lived and who—along with Charlotte Bunch and others—started the DC women's group in late 1967 early 68.

MRR: Could you talk a little about the founding of Weatherman? I assume it was in the middle of SDS...

CATHY WILKERSON MAY NOT BE A NAME TOO FAMILIAR TO ALL OF YOU MEAN PUNK ROCKERS. BUT IT SHOULD BE. PART OF THE TRADITION OF YOUTH REBELLION AND LEFTIST POLITICAL ACTION IN NORTH AMERICA, SHE WAS AN ACTIVE MEMBER OF STUDENTS FOR A DEMOCRATIC SOCIETY (SDS), A FOUNDING MEMBER OF WEATHERMAN AND ONE OF THE WEATHER UNDERGROUND. IF YOU'RE AT ALL FAMILIAR WITH THE STORY OF THE WEATHER UNDERGROUND, ONE THING YOU PROBABLY KNOW ABOUT IS THE TOWNHOUSE EXPLOSION IN GREENWICH VILLAGE THAT TOOK THE LIVES OF THREE MEMBERS OF THE GROUP. WILKERSON'S FATHER OWNED THE TOWNHOUSE, AND CATHY WOULD LATER SERVE ALMOST A YEAR IN PRISON FOR EXPLOSIVES CHARGES RELATING TO THE INCIDENT. AT THE TIME, SHE HAD BEEN OUT ON BAIL FOR CLUBBING A POLICE OFFICER DURING THE DAYS OF RAGE IN CHICAGO. VERY ACTIVE, INTELLIGENT AND OUTSPOKEN, SHE'S BEEN AN INSPIRATION TO ME FOR YEARS AND I COULDN'T BELIEVE MY LUCK WHEN SHE AGREED TO DO THIS INTERVIEW.

INTERVIEW BY LANCE HAHN

Cathy Wilkerson: No Weatherman came along as SDS was in its last stages. SDS' strength always lay in its role as a physical and intellectual gathering place where young people networked, processed enormous amounts of information collectively and informally, and experimented with different programmatic expressions of those ideas. It never solved the organizational dilemma of how to actually be effective as an organization. That didn't matter that much until the scale of Vietnam became overwhelming with hundreds of US casualties a month, violence against the black movement escalated with dozens of activists killed, especially when COINTELPRO (the government spying and dirty tricks program geared to sow internal dissension) became really active in the white left (after being busy in the civil rights movement for years) and specifically in SDS. Then, the organizational weaknesses started defining SDS. Everyone started feeling the need for the "best" response and it quickly started to dissolve into factions. No one came out clean in these debates. But SDS was never equipped to be big and when it got big it was time to invent new forms of organization.

MRR: Do you think the end of SDS or the development of Weatherman was inevitable? Are there any regrets about the end of SDS or did it seem like a logical time to do other things?

Cathy Wilkerson: SDS was a phenomenon of the 60s. It never had a programmatic identity that could have survived. That wasn't the point. Every year people would put organizational questions on the agenda at national meetings and float proposals for how to fix the most obvious problems and the main body always tabled the proposals in favor of talking about the draft, racism, the war, women's issues, etc. We had no local models or experiences to guide the discussion for how a national organization could function and so there was no basis for solving the problems.

MRR: During that time, what made you ally yourself with Weatherman instead of any of the other groups that were splitting out of SDS?

Cathy Wilkerson - The question of race. No one else was distributing stuff to read and talking about it as a central—as *the* central—construct. I think now the way it was done was manipulative to some extent and certainly the theoretical framework was flawed, but many people, myself included, felt that despite our unwavering support for civil rights, SDS had missed something else in the discussion about race. Since national liberation struggles around the world were gaining strength at that time—many of them were explicitly dealing with the US vs. third world construct—and many black activists in the US were exploring nationalism, certainly we needed to understand the history of these ideas and how they impacted on efforts of whites to participate in change.

MRR: Was Weatherman a response to the issue of non-violence vs. symbolic violence or was the initial idea more ambiguous?

Cathy Wilkerson: The talk about violence in the late 60s was mostly about self-defense. Black communities in the South had long practiced armed self-defense in certain situations but no one talked about it, because to talk about it would have been to provoke a white racist response. But in many isolated rural communities or black neighborhoods people had shot guns to defend their homes. Some people like Robert Williams argued that it should be talked about and made an explicit part of the strategy. The Black Panther Party then took the idea of armed self-defense to northern cities, but made it a question of community defense, using the states own laws to frame it.

Among Weatherman of 1969, there was no explicit discussion of using violence as an offensive strategy in any of the collectives I was in until the Flint Convention during the end of December 1969 and even then it was presented through images and slogans rather than any explicit arguments. Everyone talked, sang and danced revolution but no one really talked about what that meant in the US. Weatherman attempted to do that, but they said revolution here would happen as the result of the victory of national liberation struggles around the world causing the core of US imperialism to disintegrate. The job of whites was to organize support for people of color. Unfortunately, while I believe

support is important, I believe now that everyone has both a personal and social stake in change, and we are working hard for our collective survival. To "vanguard-ize" any segment of humanity is very dangerous. Whites did and do need to be a lot better at listening to people of color—individually and organizationally—but all members of humanity depend equally on our ability to right the ship.

MRR: At the time, do you think your decisions as far as a change in tactics was more intellectual or emotional? Which would you say dominated these choices?

Cathy Wilkerson: The debate started with whether or not you wanted to support the National Liberation Front of South Vietnam or whether you were just anti-war and supported the slogan of Bring the Troops Home. This debate required us all to read and think about what were the justifiable grounds on which people could take up arms to defend their homeland. Still, national liberation struggles were all framed by self-defense against imperialism—or in the case of South Africa—against apartheid's rulers. I was very affected both by Regis Debray who wrote about the decision to take up arms in Cuba and in Central and South America, and by Franz Fanon who wrote about the Algerian War against the French. The problem, as defined by Weatherman's leaders, was that since white people in the US were not fighting a battle of self-defense but instead came from the community that was causing the problem, it left us as the only ones who were still pacifists with no obligation to take up arms.

So, over the course of 1969 and into 1970 various people in Weatherman came up with various constructs that would require white radicals to take up arms and take the same risks as people of color. First, in the summer of '69 Weatherman's strategy was to pick fights with police in public places to convince young people that we were tough thinking that would convince them to join us. Then in the fall of 69, Weatherman paid more attention to the fact that there had been thousands of small little bombings over the past year or two – fire bombings of ROTC buildings, banks that supported apartheid etc., and began to develop the capacity to join in on these bombings. Then in late 69 and up through the townhouse, various collectives developed strategies to go farther with armed struggle to begin offensive actions to take heat away from the assaults on the black movement and the Vietnams. Finally, after the townhouse explosion, Weatherman settled on symbolic actions in the tradition of armed propaganda. In other words, symbolic attacks on targets that we wanted to hold accountable for particular policies.

These constructs were only vaguely thought out and barely articulated in each stage but the organization rushed headlong from one to another really without much of a plan anyway. Over the next few years, the WUO continued to try out various theoretical contexts for the strategy of symbolic bombings and about the relationship of whites to armed struggle. In my opinion now, we never came up with one that I could agree with today.

MRR: Seeing as the group originally took their name from a Bob Dylan song, was there any analysis within the group about the role of pop music or even pop culture especially at such politicized times? Part of why I ask this is because I had heard that when the police murdered Fred Hampton, he was listening to an Eric Dolphy record. I don't know if that's exactly true or not. But it seems like he was listening to radical music to go with the radical politics and I just wonder if there has ever been any analysis of that sort of thing.

Cathy Wilkerson: First, Fred Hampton had been drugged by something dropped in his drink a couple of hours earlier and was fast asleep during the assault. That's why he was shot lying in the bed. Second, the only issue that was discussed with any organization-wide coherence was race. Weatherman consciously spent more time acting and less time talking. Music was so much a part of what we thought and how we saw ourselves that it would have seemed silly to analyze it. It was music that popularized the concept of revolution, not radical literature. And, much of the discussion about revolution remained on the level of images—the way it was presented by different artists. Only a tiny minority of activists actually took up any systematic study of what that meant. Even within Weatherman, only a hand full of people thought about it in any systematic way. Later, in the New Morning Statement, the leadership put out a position about music and youth culture but it, too, only represented one aspect of the organization.

MRR: Did the group have an organizational hierarchy? Were actions decided by consensus?

Cathy Wilkerson: Weatherman was no better than SDS at either asking any of the critical questions about organizational structure or solving any of the challenges. The WUO took secrecy to be the essential variable and set up a highly hierarchical structure in which the leadership collective knew everything and people in the collectives knew nothing and therefore had little power. In between there was a very informal and therefore highly subjective strata of people who had personal relationships with one or more people in the leadership collective and therefore had access to information and power. There was no transparency or accountability. On occasion someone would challenge that but because of the secrecy others would not know that. Since everyone took common responsibility for safety no one could ever figure out a way around that problem. This kind of structure inevitably breeds inequities and corruption and this was one of the main things that finally brought the organization down in the mid seventies.

MRR: At the risk of trying to oversimplify, how would you characterize the politics of the members of the Weather Underground? Marxist? Leninist? Maoist? Communist? Anarchist? Socialist?

Cathy Wilkerson: All of the above, for starters.

MRR: There's been some talk—probably not enough—about machismo, especially in the early days of the Weather Underground. How much was that reality and how much of that was for the cameras? How much did the machismo directly translate into sexism?

Cathy Wilkerson: Weatherman was only one manifestation of a general hardening of movement culture in the late 60s because of the factors I mentioned above. The same could be seen within black, Latino and Native American activists as well. There's definitely a relationship between the abandonment of democracy, the turn towards military strategies and aggression. Machismo is a rich and complicated historical idea, which I don't think,

WE KNEW THAT IF YOU REALLY STAND UP TO THE INJUSTICES BUILT INTO THE SYSTEM YOU WOULD SUFFER INCREDIBLE VIOLENCE...

should get mixed up with sexism, aggression, or imperialist culture even though elements of all those things run through it. Because Weatherman was a white organization the way aggression played out had to do with the culture we came from—both the mainstream imperialist culture and the culture of white progressives who had resisted racism and/or exploitation (not always at the same time) for three hundred years.

We knew that if you really stand up to the injustices built into the system you would suffer incredible violence. It's interesting to note, however, that the civil rights activists of the early 20th century who planned Brown v. Board of Education and the early challenges to Jim Crow knew this too, and their response was to create a movement that used non-violence to protect itself. But we believed that we had to create ourselves into a form that could withstand that violence by becoming violent in return. It seemed logical at the time, but was the wrong place to start. Aggression, like all human instincts can be helpful or not to individuals or societies depending on the circumstances. It is ultimately a defensive instinct because it seeks to destroy not to create. The task of those who believe in justice and planetary survival is to create new forms and cultures that will allow human beings to coexist with our habitat without self-destruction. There are definitely some limitations to non-violence as a strategy. For example, Gandhi discovered in India that he could not gather a critical mass of people into the movement without relying on Hindu symbolism, which later fueled religious tensions. In the US, the civil rights movement never really found a way to apply popular non-violent struggle to economic issues. But once we discover these limitations we should explore a host of ways to get past them or to invent other strategies. A resort to violence should not be a knee jerk response.

Today, most of the national liberation movements that looked so hopeful have failed with the exception of Cuba, South Africa and Vietnam, who continue to be innovative and to tackle problems creatively. The perpetrators of violence are primarily western powers and religious fundamentalists. Male supremacy is in full reaction to fifty years of gains for women. I think that the limitations of violence as an offensive strategy are now much more apparent.

MRR: How do you reflect on the effectiveness of the Weather Underground? Do you feel like your actions made an impact directly? If yes, in what ways? Do you feel like they've had long-term impacts in terms of subsequent generations of radical/revolutionaries?

Cathy Wilkerson: I still puzzle about this one. The big and lasting changes to come out of the 60s were roughly in the area civil rights and a successful end to the iron hold of Jim Crow laws, the cultural changes in gender roles, relationships and our generation's challenge to consumerism, and the end of the war in Vietnam without a nuclear holocaust. SDS certainly contributed to all three although certainly more to the last two. Weatherman was very confrontational and flashy, but compared to the contribution of anti-war GIs and vets, for instance, we were quite insignificant. The radical Catholic pacifists who stole the FBI files—leading to the exposure of COINTELPRO—and who poured blood on draft files around the country were another small group who made a huge contribution. We lent our voice to the chorus, but we certainly didn't have a solo role.

MRR: What is your opinion on radical and revolutionary groups of today? What do you think when you see or read about the anti-globalism protests at the WTO? Do you feel any sort of camaraderie or does it make you feel squeamish?

Cathy Wilkerson: I had been immersed in teaching and in working with children from backgrounds of abuse and neglect during the eighties and nineties. I hadn't had a minute to follow international developments in any detail. I had been slightly annoyed by friends who talked about how bad NAFTA was because their arguments against the growth of global trade seemed so small minded. I wanted to hear an argument about how global trade was the hope of the future but here was a set of beliefs that needed to guide the development of that trade so I played devil's advocate to the extent I participated in the conversation at all. When Seattle happened, I realized that this whole conversation had been going on amongst a great many young people and I knew that if the movement had that kind of depth, the conversation I wanted to hear was out there. I just needed to find it. I also knew then that this was a movement that could make a difference. I still didn't have internet access at that time. But within a year or two I got on line, 9-11 happened, and I stopped teaching full time so I could write the book. It was then that I found the conversation and started sitting in on a number of organizations in New York and was very excited about what I saw. I felt the same kind of commitment and questioning that characterized the 60s.

As a generation, we were outraged by the hypocrisy of the rhetoric about our democracy during the Cold War. Young people today are outraged by the extent to which most major decisions are being taken out of the democratic public forums and hidden in the private sector. Plus, between corporate funding of candidates and the increasingly alarming specter of vote fraud it seemed like the public forum itself—at least on the national and state levels—is becoming a farce.

I also found that young people have some better sense of the history of progressive people to make democracy more democratic, although it is still sketchy. I think all the interest in the 60s might help today's young people avoid some of the mistakes we made. I also hope they can learn from the things we did right that were so powerful, because we did a lot right and the affects of the changes were so far reaching it has taken fifty years for us to even begin to take stock of them.

MRR: Considering the times, why do you think there isn't a similar response to Bush and Iraq to say nothing of the poverty in this country? Why do you think there is a new interest in the Weather Underground? What do you think of the new slew of books on the group?

Cathy Wilkerson: Tens of thousands of young people—then and now—were so frustrated by the difficulties of change and by the moral outrages being committed by the country's economic and political leaders that we wanted to abandon caution and reason and act on the purity of our outrage. Weatherman's strategy—although few would have been able to say so at the time—was simply to speak the outrage in the purest forms we could imagine with no thought to how that might or might not actually change anything. While for a whole host of reasons most people didn't do it and disagreed with Weatherman, it spoke to the anger seething inside many of them. People frequently say to me "I thought what you were doing was wrong, but every time you did an action I cheered." People felt a need for that voice to have a public expression. Now, I think many of us feel a need for that voice again, but I hope we will find more creative and less damaging ways of doing it.

MRR: What was damaging about it?

Cathy Wilkerson: Inherent in the voice of what we expressed and the way we expressed it was a challenge to everyone else. We implied that their work was somehow of lesser quality. We put forth the willingness to do armed struggle as a criteria for leadership, and so we were setting ourselves up to be the leaders of the movement, even though at the beginning we denied that occasionally. Secondly, inherent in the decision to form a Marxist Leninist Party, which in some fashion or another we were involved in, is to abandon democracy as a means for engendering change. This is a pretty serious step and we took it without most of us ever having a conversation about it. If democracy is the goal—and we are angered because we don't really have it now and people in the third world have even less access to decisions that affect their lives—we need to think carefully about the organizational forms we use to get there. Lenin thought that he was improving people's access to decision making but the democratic centralist party has proven almost as problematic as the attempts in the West to have a real democracy. I don't have the answer nor do I now think there is one answer for all places, all situations and all times. We need strong functional organizations but not ones that are made "to last forever." SDS, for instance, was terrific until it reached a certain size. It would never work today because there are far too many people who would want to join at the onset. But it was not a "victim" of its success. It was time to move on. But then, we didn't know what to move on to or how to find out. Now, I think people are carrying out the experiments to answer that question and its very exciting.

MRR: What did you think of the film "Weather Underground"? I was really shocked when I saw it that you were not even mentioned. I'm not even sure if they mentioned Kathy Boudin or Jeff Jones.

Cathy Wilkerson: Sam Green and Bill Siegel asked me to participate in the film but after several long and interesting conversations I concluded that what I wanted to say would not really have a place in their film. Also, I was teaching back then and working fifteen-hour days seven days a week and didn't really have time to collect my thoughts in the most articulate fashion. I really have to work at presenting my ideas coherently. So, I decided not to participate. In the end, I think they learned a lot making the film and the film succeeds in raising some good questions. Perhaps the telling of the history and the raising of some questions is all you can do in two hours. It was their choice not to mention names beyond those they interviewed and it was fine with me.

MRR: When people write or talk about the group now, there seems to be a sort of romanticism of it. Sort of a Bonnie and Clyde element. Do you resent that? Do you feel like that might have been an element of the group?

Cathy Wilkerson: Well, I certainly think that any kind of writing or talk that romanticizes the experience does an injustice to today's activists. In most ways we did the best we could under the circumstances and we have a lot to be proud of that we did. It is also true that we had little knowledge or understanding of the history of the impact of violence as part of a strategy to fight for justice and equality. Our thinking about it —and there was a great amount of diversity on this subject within the organization—was generally defined by our middle class, white backgrounds. Our concept of what it means to provide leadership to any segment of the movement for social change was equally naïve and quite arrogant. While the Weathermen's analysis of imperialism and racism were substantive and challenging even if incomplete and somewhat flawed, our analysis of the beliefs, goals and strategies for social change were pompous and damaging to the movement. But it's not like others had it more figured out during that period of 1969 and 1970. Everyone was grasping at straws, although I think we did more damage to each other and others than many. The important point is, though, that there is an enormous amount to learn from our mistakes. We took a lot of risks and invested everything and so we turned over a lot of stones. Many of those mistakes will be repeated if we don't have a conversation about the them that seeks not to lionize or blame, but to look beneath for what forces were at work, what was missing in our thinking, what parts of it did others understand better and so on. Romanticizing the history makes learning these lessons impossible because it makes the nitty gritty of what happened inaccessible to others.

MRR: Is your book finished? What stage is it at?

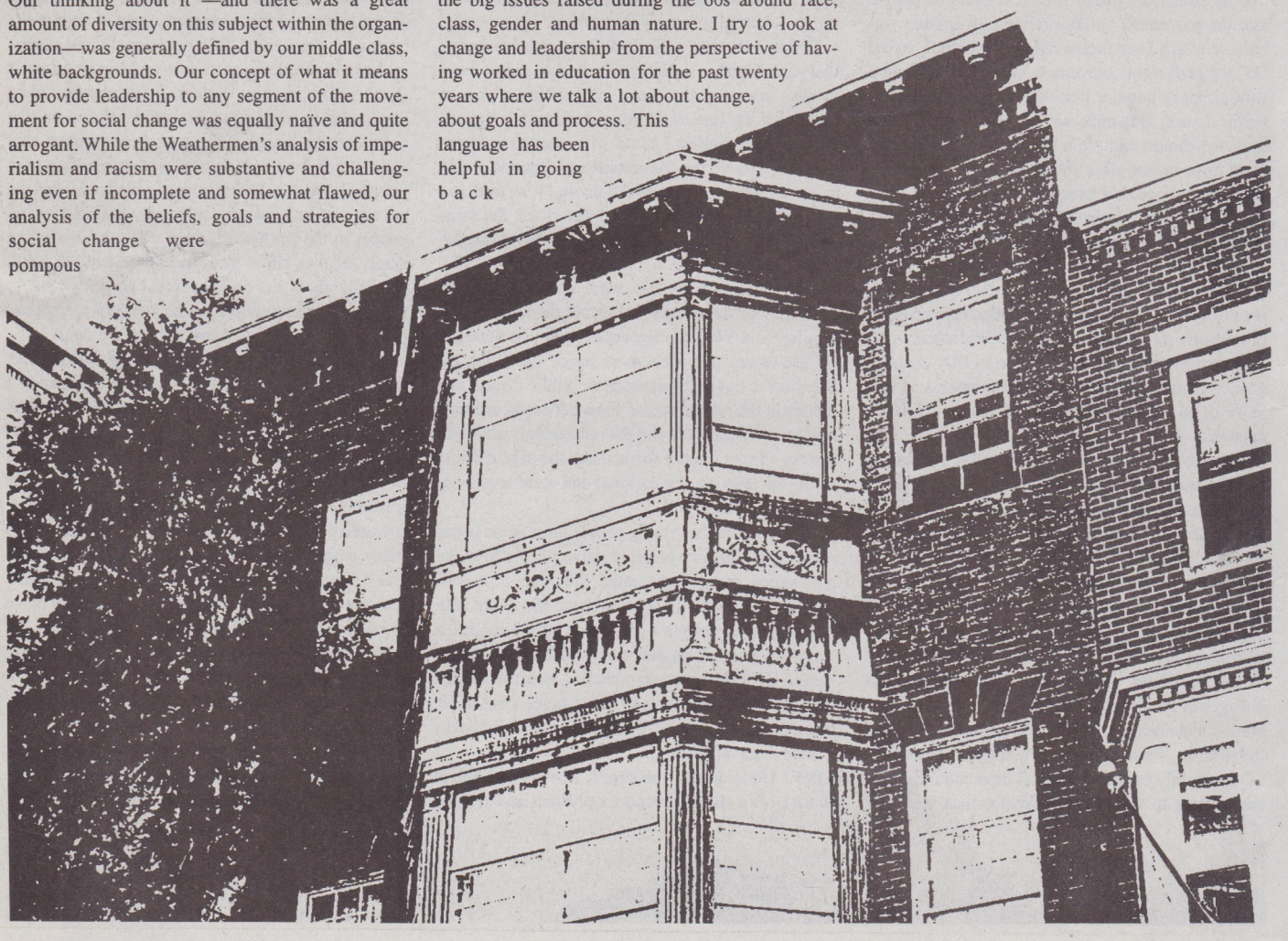
Cathy Wilkerson: The book is close to be being finished, but since I am also teaching it will still take me several more months.

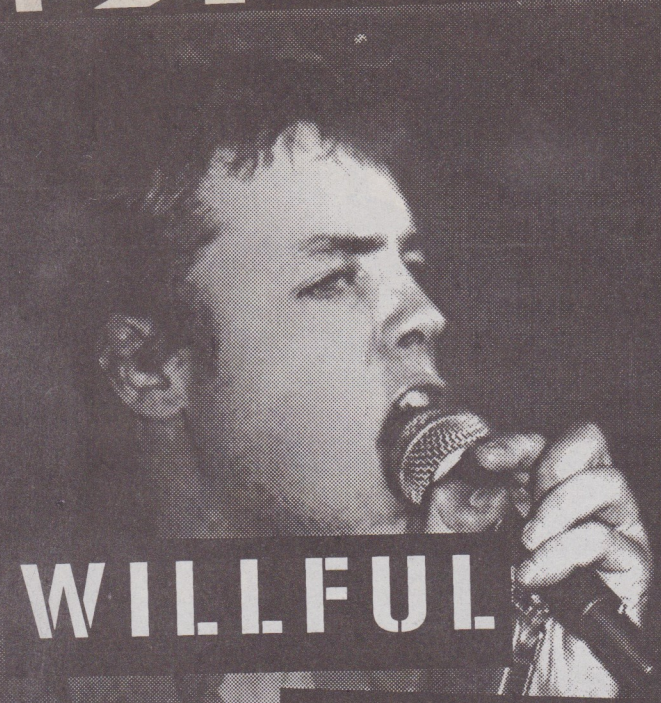
MRR: Is it a complete autobiography or is it mostly about your times with SDS and Weather Underground?

Cathy Wilkerson: It is a memoir that uses my own story to explore questions like how political consciousness develops in young people in the US and to look at the way personal history, community culture and national and international affairs interweave and affect each other. It addresses some of the big issues raised during the 60s around race, class, gender and human nature. I try to look at change and leadership from the perspective of having worked in education for the past twenty years where we talk a lot about change, about goals and process. This language has been helpful in going back to evaluate our efforts in the 60s.

MRR: Anything else you wanna add? Did I leave anything major out?

Cathy Wilkerson: Much of the energy of the 60s was fueled by our tremendous sense of hope and possibilities. As young people, we felt that we could make a difference, and we did. We are indebted to earlier generations of activists who laid the groundwork for the civil rights movement during the thirties and forties because it was the passion of this movement that generated the hope for the next ten years. Ironically, that sense of possibility was amplified by national liberation movements, which have proven less durable. But our contribution, I think, was the sense that we could form communities that were enduring, which together could support enormous changes within our own lives and work for change within broader society. These communities have proven to be enduring, if not the original ones, then new ones that we have continued to create. In this sense, Weatherman was not particularly successful. But almost everyone in Weatherman—those of us to survive—emerged as activists who have continued to draw on the strengths of the earlier part of the 60s, and while I no longer see race/ethnic identity as the sole central construct of the world today I continue to believe it is of critical importance and I continue to listen carefully.





WILLFUL NEGLECT

Willful Neglect is one of the great overlooked hardcore bands of the early 80's. While some bands have achieved cult status in recent years with the abundance of reissues and bootleg t-shirts, some great bands continue to be lost in obscurity. St. Paul's Willful Neglect are one of those greats, and they are finally getting some much-deserved attention. Their sound reminds me a lot of ***Land of the Lost****-era FREEZE or early FU'S. They played fast, energetic hardcore with some great melodic leads and flashy guitar work, showing their solid background in 70's hard rock as well as punk. Willful Neglect's two 12"s and unreleased LP have been reissued on CD by the original label, Nelgected Records. German bootleg/reissue labels and other bottom feeders tried to get their hands on the WN material, but the band and label held out until they could do a proper job of remastering and re-releasing it themselves. The CD is distributed by Havoc Records (www.havocrex.com) and should be available through most punk outlets. I got a hold of some archival photos to go along with the band history, which appears here, courtesy of Kill From the Heart. I also caught up with some of the ex-members and asked them what to go over the best and worst things about being in Willful Neglect. Introduction and interview by The Professor*

Band History compiled by John Kass and Roger Debace (Courtesy of *Kill From the Heart* website).

WILLFUL NEGLECT were a hardcore punk band from the East Side of St. Paul, Minnesota. They formed in late 1981 by Wade Calhoon (vocals), Roger DeBace (guitar), Scott Peterson (drums), Rory Schoenheider (guitar), and Jimmy Wallin (bass). Wade's brother, Thirston Howell, was the soundman and roadie for the band. Band names were tossed around (Sorry Confusers and Unlikely Whimperers were a few) but eventually the name WILLFUL NEGLECT was chosen. All members were around 20 to 21 years old.

In less than a year, WILLFUL NEGLECT had 12 original songs and in the summer of '82 decided to record at Blackberry Way Studios with Steve Fjelstad, who also recorded many Twin Tone Records acts. The result was the *Willful Neglect* 12" EP, released in November of 1982 on the band's Neglected Records. 1000 copies were pressed. The first pressing of 500 copies included an insert with some lyrics. *Maximum Rock'n'Roll* fanzine called "Abort the Mission" from the EP "one of the best songs of 1982" on the cover of MRR #4.

WILLFUL NEGLECT set up and played many shows in St. Paul, bringing in and selling their own booze and using the profits to record and rent the next rehearsal space. They were featured on local CBS affiliate WCCO-TV for a "Local Punk" news report, where a show at Castle Greens in North St. Paul was filmed for broadcast. The band also played clubs in St Paul & Minneapolis such as The 7th Street Entry, McCafferty's and Goofy's Upper Deck with bands such as HUSKER DU, MINOR THREAT, THE CIRCLE JERKS, LOUD FAST RULES (who became SOUL ASYLUM), THE EFFIGIES, RIFLE SPORT, MAN-SIZED ACTION, FINAL CONFLICT, GROUND ZERO, THE REDS, and CIVIL DEFENSE. They then started to play other Midwestern cities such as Chicago and Milwaukee, becoming friends with The Effigies, DIE KREUZEN, NAKED RAYGUN, ARTICLES OF FAITH, SACRED ORDER, RIGHTS OF THE ACCUSED, THE CLITBOYS, and NEGATIVE ELEMENT.

WILLFUL NEGLECT recorded their second 12" EP, *Justice For No One*, in early 1983, once again employing Steve Fjelstad at Blackberry Way. The Replacements recorded *Stink* there the very same month. *Justice For No One* was released in the summer of 1983 on Neglected Records. 1000 copies were pressed. The band then toured the West Coast in August, playing Reno, San Jose, San Francisco, San Fernando Valley, East LA, and Albuquerque. They shared the stage with bands like DRI, SS DECONTROL, GOVERNMENT ISSUE, AGRESSION, ILL REPUTE, THE FUCK-UPS, LOS OLVIDADOS, PLAIN WRAP, and PERSONALITY-CRISIS. They stayed at the BYO house in Hollywood while in South California. Unfortunately, shows scheduled with THE BUTTHOLE SURFERS in San Antonio and Houston had to be cancelled.

When the band got back to Minnesota, they rented an old Christian recording studio in suburban St. Paul and started presenting shows on weekends, which were well-attended by Minneapolis and St. Paul punks, along with biker gangs and thrill-seekers of all kinds. In the spring of 1984, the group entered Control Sound to record their third effort. A much wider

variety of music was recorded here, and the result—material for a full-length LP to be titled *Big Enough to Get It* —can be compared to BAD RELIGION's *Into the Unknown*, due to the determined effort of the band to get away from the confines of Hardcore Punk. Sadly, this LP was never released and the band broke up in 1984. Six of the most rocking tracks from *Big Enough To Get It* have ended up on *1982-1984*, a CD released in the fall of 2003 on Neglected Records. This CD contains all 23 tracks from both EPs along with the six bonus tracks. Ed Ackerson and Roger DeBace remastered the CD.

WHAT WERE THE BEST THINGS ABOUT BEING IN WILLFUL NEGLECT?

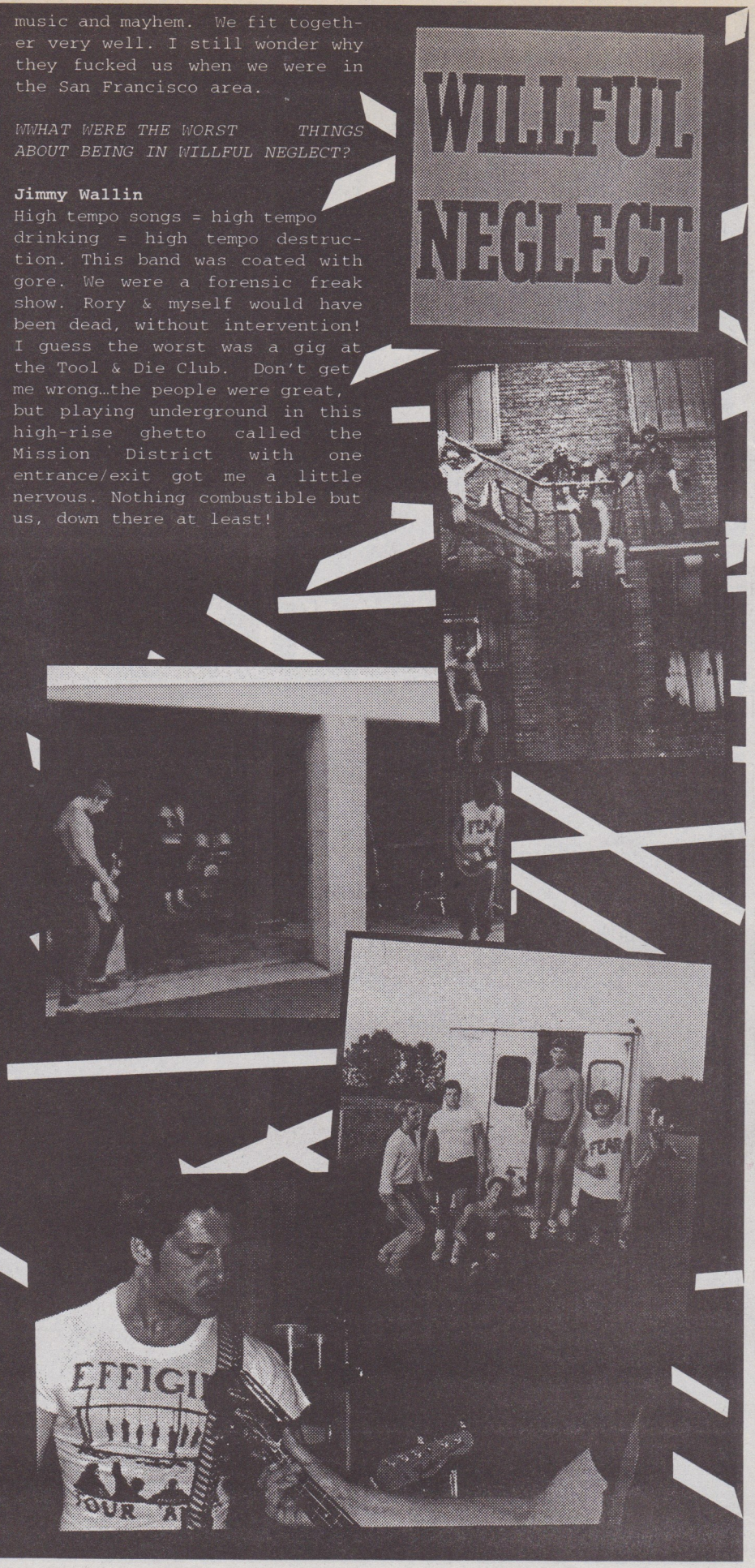
Rory Schoenheider
I think our best shows, obviously, were the shows that we blew the doors off of who ever we were playing with that particular night. I mean, we were a guitar band first and foremost, bred from the loins of BLACK SABBATH, LED ZEPPLIN, THE STOOGES and RADIO BIRDMAN. I think we really set out to *crush* the bands we played with. I think we tore the heads clean off of every band we played with *except* for the time we played with Minor Threat at the Purple Hearts Club. We gave 'em a little shit about being straight edge, only because we were beer soaked sods. But Ian was cool and said it wasn't meant to be taken so literally. Anyway, that night, and I think I can speak for all of the boys here, we were given an extra hole courtesy of Minor Threat.

Roger De Bace
I would consider the Duffy's gig with THE CIRCLE JERKS a highlight. By that, I mean we worked hard enough and earned the reputation to attract enough people for them to request us being there. The chances we took to rent the church and to use those resources to our advantage made us feel like very young entrepreneurs. McCaferty's...we pretty much took over that place.

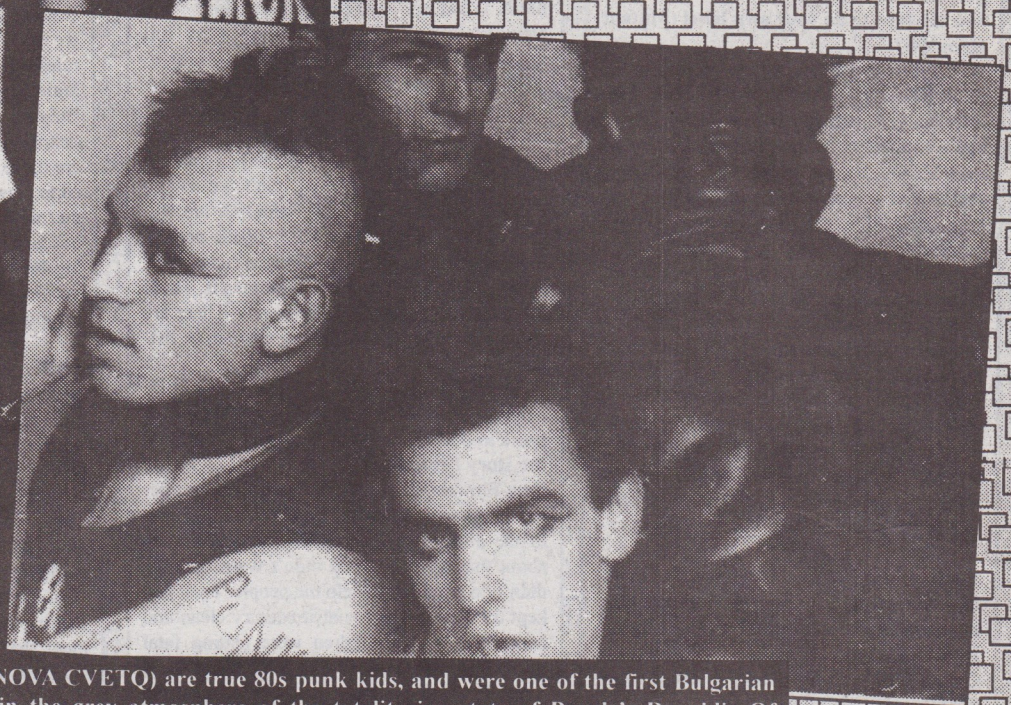
Jimmy Wallin
I just liked the physicality of it all. Fuck the words, meaning and message.. just let me rip the strings off this rig!! I liked the Duffy's shows when we supported THE CIRCLE JERKS. There was always a good turnout there...a couple of kick-ass nights of music and mayhem. We fit together very well. I still wonder why they fucked us when we were in the San Francisco area.

WWHAT WERE THE WORST THINGS ABOUT BEING IN WILLFUL NEGLECT?

Jimmy Wallin
High tempo songs = high tempo drinking = high tempo destruction. This band was coated with gore. We were a forensic freak show. Rory & myself would have been dead, without intervention! I guess the worst was a gig at the Tool & Die Club. Don't get me wrong...the people were great, but playing underground in this high-rise ghetto called the Mission District with one entrance/exit got me a little nervous. Nothing combustible but us, down there at least!



THE NEW FLOWERS



The NEW FLOWERS (NOVA CVETQ) are true 80s punk kids, and were one of the first Bulgarian punk bands to emerge in the grey atmosphere of the totalitarian state of People's Republic Of Bulgaria. I knew about them, but it wasn't earlier than 2003 that I could get my hands on their demo tape, which was self released by the band. This interview was conducted recently, just a month after their first ever album came out on AON records (www.aonrcds.cjb.net). I believe NEW FLOWERS will be one of the most exotic first generation punk acts ever featured in MRR. Enjoy their witty and interesting answers and support this band—they deserve it!

MRR: Hello! Please introduce the band to MRR readers worldwide!

New Flowers: Hello to you too! We are glad to be finally interviewed by someone. This is our first interview ever, and we've been around since 1977. We are the NEW FLOWERS and the name represents our attitude towards music and life in general–we are not serious about anything. There are 4 people in the band now. Angel Pavlov plays drums, Nicky Nikolov and Ivan Popov play guitar, and Valeri Stoichkov is the bassist. We all have vocal parts as well. It's not clear yet who we are. [laughter].

MRR: How did you start it all back then, in the end of the 70s?

New Flowers : It started as a joke. While listening to the albums of SLADE, BJELO DUGME, NAZARETH, and so on, we decided to become rock musicians, have long hair, play air guitars, sing in front of a fake microphones, and all the other standards of the Western rock culture.

I had a Gayer piano, and it barely survived my first attempts of composing rock' n 'roll. Pavel had some plates, buckets and small pioneer drums, his brother Sasho tormented an acoustic guitar. We shamelessly covered—or better said "buried"—some classic songs, giving them new interpretations. We had a great time and the result was nothing but pure punk rock. But it was 1978 when we heard STRANGLERS and the CLASH on the Skopje Radio and we understood where we were going. We were punks in a country where rock music was officially forbidden and we found it funny!

MRR: Your demo is a real cornerstone for the Bulgarian punk scene, and it is a very good representation of songs recorded between 1983 and 1995. It is amazing that you recorded stuff in the 80s, since during that time in Bulgaria being a rock musician or even having a tape with any rock music would have been considered a dangerous crime against the state. What gave you the idea to do your own label (Mutant Records)?

New Flowers: Well, I have to correct something here. The songs on the tape are from different years (83-95), but we recorded them again in the 90s. Some of them exist in old versions too, but we recorded all on a Soviet reel-to-reel machine and the quality is not very good. It is true that we used to have problems because of some of these songs. And not only for the songs, but the haircuts, clothes, and badges. We were more important for the militiamen than the local criminals. A song like "Life" was almost banned as making a mockery of the socialist system. Same with "Radiation," which inspired by the chaos after the Chernobyl explosion, a topic whose discussion was strictly forbidden among ordinary people. And "Mutant records" is just fun, a silly attempt to be original. It just sounded cool.

MRR: I grew up in the 80s and I remember the first concerts of underground bands in my hometown. Organized by the Dimitrov's Youth Communist Organisation (Komsomol) , these were heavily visited by militiamen who had their special dogs barking at the crowds of teenagers. What about your concerts at that time, was there a large militia presence?

New Flowers: Well, honestly, we do not remember the militiamen being that oppressive. We played exactly 2 times before the fall of communism. The first time at a rock festival in 1987—we got an alarm clock as a prize. The second time was as the support band for a performance of Rumen Sazdov, a brilliant painter. We played live in front of 1000 people, an enormous show with special effects. People loved it, it was even recorded on a video tape. Sadly after this we started to have troubles with the militia—even DS (State Security) was asked to deal with us. As a result our next gigs were no sooner than the early 90s.

MRR: Who writes the song lyrics? They are in Bulgarian, and not only do they sound meaningful, they also sound great! I know that some are pretty old also—do you think you have to update them?

New Flowers: As long as people like the old lyrics, they still have a meaning. Of course, we are working on 4 new songs too. It's really amusing to write lyrics, and we—Valyo, Nicky and Ivan—write them all.

MRR: If you were 18-19 years old and had to start it all again, what be your source of inspiration? People think that "democracy" is here now, and that there are no more reasons to be angry. On the contrary, I still think there are more than enough things to fight against. The grey brick walls of communism were covered with advertisements and promotional posters and the rows of workers are going to the same factories, smiling happily, as they have a dishwasher now—bought with a credit from the nearby bank. What are your thoughts on this?

New Flowers: The brainwashing goes full speed ahead. It's so close to having nothing to "wash" in the future. We will be always against the stream, yet we are an active opposition. Global anti-globalists, if it makes any sense to you. We are trying to make our fellow country men wake up and react. If we don't, we will be wiped from the face of the Earth. We are still sick of the sheep-like mentality of the people, the lack of interest in anything besides their bank accounts, and the lies of politicians. These things never changed, unfortunately. There are still things to be against, far too many to be listed in this interview.

MRR: "Radiation" is your most famous track and also the name for your CD. What's the story behind it?

New Flowers: It was done some months after the Chernobyl explosion, and it is our reaction to the silence of the communist government about that disaster. They didn't warn us, they didn't do anything to help the people. They just kept the face of the socialist country clean and happy, while our children were getting fatal overdoses of radiation. The song may seem funny to some, yet it is a true reflection of the absurd situation inside the country.

We got into a lot of trouble for this song. Speaking the truth—even with humor—was a real crime back then.

As a whole, technical development will bring no happiness to mankind. We lose our humanity and as a result we are alienated from our surroundings…but maybe it's better this way. Who knows.

MRR: Since I met you, I was amazed by your interest in "exotic" punk cultures. Some people say punk was made in UK/USA only and neglect any other bands. Yet we both know and like stuff like VIRUS 27, AZRA, DEZERTER, and KINO, so we know the other side. What do you think about this?

New Flowers: We love "exotic " punk acts, no matter if they are from Russia, China or Portugal. English-language lyrics are not obligatory, contrary to what some people think. Bulgarian bands should try to sing in Bulgarian, as we sound best in our native language. It is not really important which country gave birth the punk culture, but it matters that it was born, developed, and that there is some future too!

MRR: Do you have any dreams as a band – a concert with the STRANGLERS or a tour across Bulgaria? Is there anything connected to the band that you regret?

New Flowers: A STRANGLERS tour across Bulgaria suits us fine, though first you have to bring them here. We have a lot of other dreams too, but they are slowly coming true. For example the album—we waited for 25 years to see it ready, and it happened! Any regrets? Maybe for not calling the band "Ear Wax" or "Sauerkraut." [laughter]

MRR: Speaking of your first CD—tell us more about it.

New Flowers: The CD was released this April, after a whole year of preparation and waiting. It features 29 tracks, restored to sound better since we never recorded in a proper studio. It was co-released by several labels worldwide, but the main engine behind it all is AON from Bulgaria. We are looking for some international distribution now. People seem to love it, and we are more than happy about this. We were invited to play in a big festival in Bulgaria this summer with AGATHOCLES and some other cool bands. Things are moving along. We are working on 4 new songs—time will tell what will happen. There will be more music, we can't escape that.

MRR: What are your impressions from the scene in Bulgaria these days. For a moment I thought it was going to disappear in the nothingness forever, but it seems that now things are slowly changing for the better?

New Flowers: Things were rather bad, yeah. There was one obvious peak in the early 90s, and then it changed. We were refused gigs; the audience was not that interested anymore. We keep our memories from these days, and we are looking towards the future. There is a movement, that is for sure! But still it needs help, and a serious attitude!

MRR: Punk, politics, and anarchy—your thoughts?

New Flowers: We share no political ambitions, yet we are not apolitical. We are inside the system, so we have to know it well. The anarchist principles in our art are simply obligatory.

MRR: Your biggest fears?

New Flowers: We are afraid of frozen fish, falling bricks, belly soup, Marilyn Manson, Baba Yaga—you know, normal human fears. [laughter]

MRR: Any last words?

New Flowers: Amen!

Contact the band and AON at: AON, c/o Ivailo Tonchev , Stara Zagora 6010, Kv"Kazanski" 16-G-115, Bulgaria

aon@mail.bg, www.aonrcds.cjb.net

ASHTRAY

MRR: OK, the first question I want to ask is…uh…I'm going to drink this beer.

Quinn: That's not a question.

MRR: Hmm, yes. How does everyone feel about beer?

Sarah Jane: We love it.

MRR: Alright, the first question…it seems to me that Ashtray was born from a backlash of all the emo bands popping up in Sonoma County. Would you say that was the case?

Quinn: No, Ashtray's been around for a long time.

Dave: Yeah, actually we have.

Quinn: Yeah, I remember you guys trying to do it for a long time eve before emo hit.

Dave: Yeah, even before I met Sarah Jane I was trying to start the band because I was sick of all the pop-punk and emo bands, and Resilience wasn't around, so there were no real punk bands in the area, and I wanted a hardcore punk band…but I didn't get it, I got Ashtray.

Quinn: Wasn't there a keyboard involved at one point?

Dave: The first incarnation of Ashtray was supposed to sound like Filth.

Sarah Jane: Yeah

MRR: In the song "Emo-liminate" you say "Once you're a punk, you're always a punk", but in my experience most punks don't feel that way, and they'll brand you a sellout in a heartbeat. So where does that stance come from?

Dave: Well, the whole thing is "Once you're a punk, you're always a punk. You were never punk in the first place." If you say you used to be a punk, then it's not true.

Bonnie: I always saw it as a joke. It's not punk to go around saying how punk you are, and that's exactly what we're doing.

Dave: Punks have been going around saying how punk they are for years.

MRR: So what are your thoughts on the current state of punk rock in the area?

Dave: In the area? It's getting better, actually. Every month it's getting better.

Joe: There's cool punk bands, you just won't hear them on the radio.

Quinn: I figure all this emo is good for punk, because it's starting to get to the preppy kids.

Sarah Jane: Oh yeah emo is popular; it's on the O.C.

Quinn: The more popular it gets, the kids who are against popularity are gonna lash out like they always do, seek alternatives, and it'll be punk rock…or rap…oh, or pop.

Bonnie: or polka.

MRR: Make no mistake, there's a fastly growing populous of reggae kids. So what do you think you're niche is in the bay area punk scene? How were your shows at Gilman St.?

Joe: They were really nice to us.

Sarah Jane: Seems like most of their shows are crustcore bands still, or hardcore so some of the shows we've been booked on we haven't quite fit, but people still listened and stayed for us, which is cool.

Joe: Yeah, we're not going to punch you if you don't get down to us…

Quinn: (Cackling insanely) I might.

Dave: It depends if I'm drunk or not, I guess.

Joe: We're punk rock, but we're fun…Dave might punch you.

MRR: I've noticed a bunch of your songs are about your friends. What's Joe Morato all about? What's a Joe Morato bomb?

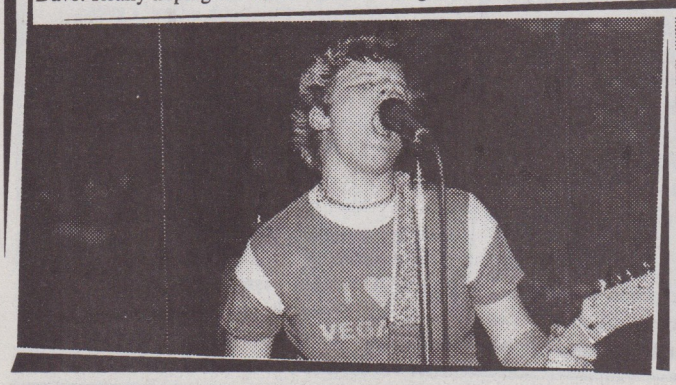
Dave: Well Joe Morato is a friend of ours who is basically the most belligerent, ridiculously annoying asshole ever, and if…

Sarah Jane: *Ever*

Joe: Yeah, if you're passed out you're fair game.

Sarah Jane: Especially if you're under sixteen.

Bonnie: Man or woman.
Dave: He's a dangerous foe, and if you get him liquored up you can basically aim him like a carefully targeted weapon, all you have to do is tell him "Hey, this guy was talking shit about you…"
MRR: Right on. So what's your beef with vegans?
Dave: Well, Sarah Jane?
Bonnie: You know some of my best friends are vegans,
Sarah Jane: Yeah, totally.
MRR: Enough of this "My best friends are vegans" bullshit. In your song "White sugar is the devil, y'all" you tear vegans apart. What about the line "Fuck you vegans"?
Sarah Jane: Well, we just have to make fun of them. Vegans and vegetarians have become such a staple, especially in this county.
Bonnie: Truthfully, the most ridiculous thing you can do is be pissed off at a vegan. That's like being pissed off at…
Sarah Jane: Peace-loving hippie?
Bonnie: Right.
Quinn: I wish everybody was a vegan. There'd be more meat for me.
Joe: At the same time though, it's a popularized lifestyle of convenience. Hungry people eat food. They don't give a shit. A hundred years ago there were no vegans. Why? People were hungry; they ate. There are no third world vegans. Why? Because they're fucking hungry.
Dave: Plus, it's like sexual preference. I don't have a choice, I don't like vegetables.
Bonnie: I second that.
Dave: I was just born that way. I bet if we got in a plane crash in the Andes or something, we'd eat the vegans first, because they'd probably taste better.
Joe: Yeah, they wouldn't have that musky, smoky taste. But really, it's just a joke. We don't give a shit about vegans.
Sarah Jane: Some vegetarians get pissed off, but mostly they just laugh.
MRR: Just being iconoclastic?
Quinn: I don't know what that word means.
MRR: So, what's on the slate? You guys have a tour coming up, right?
Sarah Jane: Yeah.
Joe: We're working on putting something together.
Dave: We're booking a short tour in August.
Quinn: Spokane!
Dave: Fuck yeah, Spokane.
Sarah Jane: We're going up north, Arcata to Seattle.
Dave: Really hoping for Walla Walla Washington.
We're recording a full-length album…sometime.
Sarah Jane: When we have the money.
Dave: We have the money, I think.
Bonnie: We are going into the studio in a couple of weeks to record. If all goes well, the CD should be out by mid-November.
Dave: What else is on the slate? We're playing lots of shows…I'm going to drink a lot, and…Quinn's gonna drink a lot.
Quinn: And smoke a lot!
Dave: And play video games.
Quinn: And play video games!
Dave: Joes gonna work a lot and drink a lot and get laid a lot.
Joe: Yeah.
Quinn: Hey, I get laid a lot, too.
Dave: Bonnie's gonna surf a lot, work a lot, drink a lot, and not smoke a lot.
Sarah Jane: I'm gonna eat some tofu kabobs.
Joe: Can you kabob tofu?
MRR: So a lot of people say you have a heavy Blatz influence, and you answered in kind by covering a Blatz song, which is rad. Was that just to spite people?
Quinn: Indeed.
Dave: That one is really just for fun, for playing at parties. We get Blatz a lot, really our influence is the Grups. I hadn't really heard the Blatz in our music until people started mentioning it to us, but I was really into the Grups, and that's where it came from. Oh, and Masturbation.
Joe: We've all been in bands together before too, so we just kinda click. I think that our sound, especially musically, has it's own feel. We've been playing together long enough now that we're gonna make what we're gonna make.
Dave: Every song starts out exactly like a Blatz song, but when everyone else gets a hold of it turns into an Ashtray song…or something like that.
MRR: So do you guys ever do much Robotussin?
Quinn: Actually, it's not Robotussin that gets you high, it's Safeway brand Tussin.
Dave: We do not condone the use of Robotussin, we use Safeway Select brand maximum strength Tussin.
Sarah Jane: I use the capsules.
Quinn: It's the higher concentration of…what is it, DXM? Dextopolymorphine?
Dave: Something like that. I don't really do that anymore.
Joe: We're old, we got no livers left.
Sarah Jane: I drink alcohol.
Dave: Yeah, once you turn 21 you can buy and drink alcohol.
MRR: So you guys have a shitload of merch. The Ashtray ashtrays, of course, are rad. It seems like you're still finding you're audience, but still you've got a lot to offer. Who's in charge of that?
Quinn: That would be Bonnie.
MRR: Now's your chance to plug the merch!
Joe: Yeah! Plug it!
Bonnie: Nah.
Dave: Oh, by the way, that website that we have no knowledge of is www.ashtraypunks.com
Sarah Jane: What was the question?
MRR: I was giving Bonnie a chance to plug the merch, but she declined.
Bonnie: Ashtrays, stickers, patches, buttons, shirts. We have a 7" EP, but no one has a record player so we had to make CD-R's. Ashtray is on a couple of compilations coming out soon; we have two songs on the We Are Going to Eat You Records comp *Music is Stupid*. It should be out in late October. We were supposed to get Ashtray matchbooks, but that never panned out.
Sarah Jane: We also have a deal with Nike in the works.
Joe: Once we go on tour in Korea.
Sarah Jane: It's gonna be awesome.
MRR: So I go to a lot of your shows, and whenever I talk to people afterwards everyone seems particularly impressed with the Davie-Sarah Jane dynamic. Tell us about your relationship and how it carries over into the band.
Bonnie: If they break up we're screwed.
Dave: Basically yeah, if we break up the band's fucked.
Joe: It's fucking cool. To have the energy of two people who can just sing, and jump around and go crazy, most bands can't even deal with that. Most guys are stuck up at the mic stand playing their instrument and singing, or you just have one guy who just runs around. But we have two.
Sarah Jane: We definitely feed off of each other.
Dave: We push each other around, spank each other. It's a live sex show, basically.
MRR: So do you think that being able to scream into each other's faces, and slam into each other and whatnot is cathartic, ultimately good for your relationship's longevity because it doesn't occur elsewhere?
Sarah Jane: I think so.
Dave: It's definitely cathartic. You release a lot of frustration.
Sarah Jane: You don't want to see us if we've had an argument before a show…
Joe: It gets mean.



THE SHEMPS

Is there any such thing as "the truth?" Especially when applied to the Shemps? Full disclosure: I started the Shemps with Bill Florio and Squeaky in the fall of '99. I also co-wrote the material and was the idiot front-man. After traveling from one end of the globe to the other with my fine fellow Shemps, I quit the band one humid evening down in Coney Island. I was surprised and eventually supportive of the Shemps' desire to continue with another singer. Those videotaped Shemps singer auditions alone are right up there with those blooper wedding videos that Bill's famous for. Me and new guy Artie got off to a rocky start, but once we both realized that we were both jerks of equal stature, then everything was cool. And he's got the goods on me in the singing and idiot front-man department which is something I'll concede readily. They also ditched the old drummer (or he ditched them?), added a guitar and a keyboard and are now the punk rock monsters you now see before you. It's a kick hearing the old songs from someone other than me and now there's some other sucker that has to sleep on the floor next to Squeaky as he chases cats and dogs in his fitful sleep.

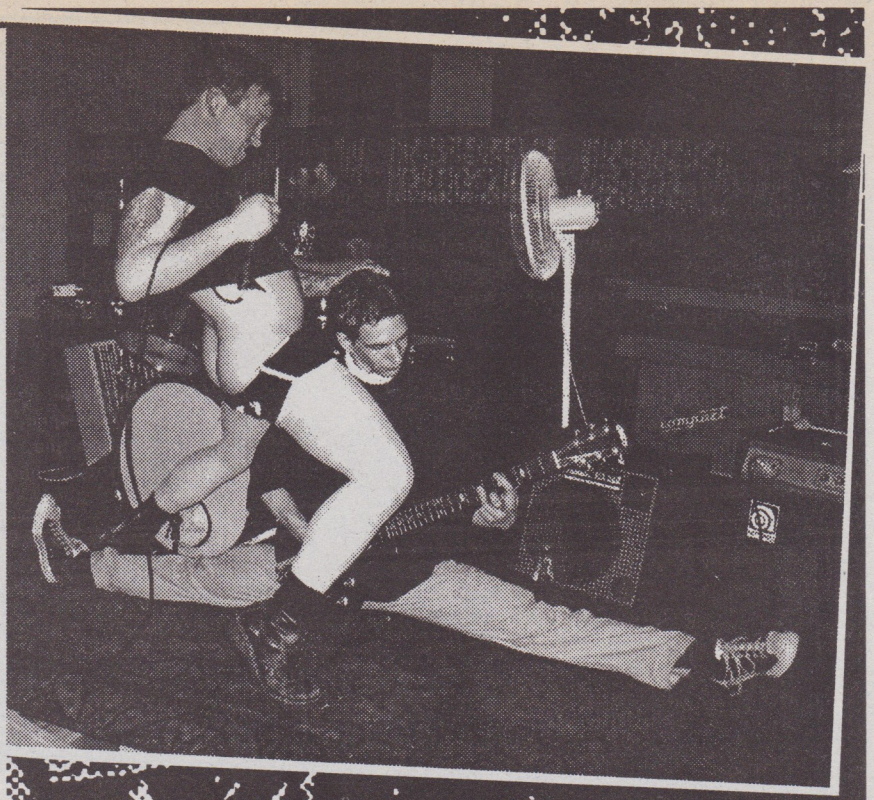
I recently sat down with half of the band at a dive in a sketchy section of Brooklyn for a little *Maximumrocknroll* chitchat. Interview by Dave The Spazz. Photos by Crystal Powell & Ashley Graj

The Truth About

MRR: Where's the rest of the Shemps?
BILL: That's a question I ask myself everyday.
MRR: I thought I was gonna get eight or nine Shemps here
ARTIE: One's in summer camp.
SQUEAKY: One's in a bar somewhere.
ARTIE: And Jim [Hass, the drummer] is probably shooting homeless people outside his window with a BB gun. He did get in trouble for shooting homeless people with a BB gun before. I'd like to go on record with that.
MRR: So what's going on with the record [Spazz Out]? When it coming out already?
BILL: We waited until we could find someone who actually liked the record instead of blackmailing someone to put it out. So it took a while.
SQUEAKY: Chief from Reservation Records is putting it out.
MRR: So what's a typical Shemps show like these days? I'm outta the loop.
SQUEAKY: The last show we played was in a basement and we were on one side of a partition and the audience was on the other side so it was kind of like a peek-a-boo show.
BILL: Artie didn't have any audience members to harass cause the mic cord wasn't long enough so he choked Squeaky.
SQUEAKY: Artie got on up where the pipes are in the basement and he wrapped his legs around my neck and he made sure that he put his sock in my mouth! He also used the mic cord and choked me!

[I have to break in here and mention that Squeaky might appear slight on first appearance. Appearances are funny things: the boy's an 8th degree black belt mothafucking kung fu killing machine that could take you out as easily as flicking a light switch. You

don't fuck with Squeaky. Even I know that.)
BILL: The show before that [Artie] threw me into a fish tank. And he picked up a three hundred pound woman and didn't remember.
ARTIE: I don't remember at all.
BILL: I didn't stop playing though.
SQUEAKY: The thing about that show was that Artie was so drunk and he was running the PA and no one had the sense-
ARTIE: I couldn't hear a thing. I don't remember.
SQUEAKY: He did take a girl and put her head on the table like this.
ARTIE: I don't remember anything about this show.
BILL: He blacked out. The next day Artie was like "did we play yesterday?"
SQUEAKY: But a typical Shemps show will put a smile on your face.
ARTIE: My face anyway.
MRR: What age group do you go for and what age group do you get?
BILL: We're starting a business making fake ID's. We're gonna make a lot of money with that.
SQUEAKY: There were some seventeen year olds at the last show and they were Bill's friends.
ARTIE: Naturally. Bill has always had a never-ending supply of teenaged girls. When I was a teenager it was like all my friends knew Bill. My ex-wife hung out with him.
SQUEAKY: That's why Artie hangs out with BILL: its to find out his secret.
ARTIE: It's because he's a nice guy and he has a car. And I'm neither of those things. And he's funny. I'm just depressing.
MRR: What's with the revolving door Squeaky policy? He plays with you guys and sometimes he doesn't. Is that like a Brian Wilson thing?
BILL: I bought Squeaky a terry-cloth robe and I was like here ya go...
MRR: Squeaky is that hard to find genius.
ARTIE: It's more like his genius is hard to find. We're still looking for it.
SQUEAKY: Well Bill and I are the founding members and I'm just taking my executive privileges.
MRR: I've got more executive privileges than you—I don't have to show up at all!
ARTIE: (checking his text messaging on his cell phone) Neil Callahan from the Shemps says "I hate you."
MRR: What made you go keyboard?
BILL: We weren't gonna just get some guy we call when Squeaky can't make it. We knew this guy Neil from Go-Kart Records. We heard that he was very talented and could handle any instrument better than us!
SQUEAKY: He's a punk rock virtuoso
ARTIE: And he drives.
SQUEAKY: He's like a Bill protege.
BILL: Except he doesn't shave.
MRR: What's your feeling towards beards on the bandstand?
BILL: It's good for the next year but once he's twenty-one the beard has to go. It makes it much easier to get him into shows. He's a good guy. He's my favorite Shemp (out of the nine or ten that there're been).
MRR: Who's your favorite Shemp?
SQUEAKY: It could be Abe [Vigoda] Shemp. He was pretty good.
MRR: What was the craziest show you ever played?
BILL: Gilman Street. That was the craziest show where none of us got hurt. I broke my arm falling off



a stage last month and Artie broke his arm onstage and I broke my nose last year when someone threw a bottle at me in San Francisco.
ARTIE: There's always a problem in San Francisco.
BILL: At Gilman Street everyone was throwing stuff at us.
ARTIE: Garbage and a couch.
BILL: There were also bags of flour and stink bombs going off. It's all because of me. I do a funny column and everyone's like hey wow....
MRR: If I break Bill's head open I'll get in his column!
ARTIE: We played in a teenaged girls prison in Long Island.
MRR: Captive audience.
BILL: Jim said that to the audience and they just looked at us like uuuhhhhh... The people that worked there loved us cause Artie scared the crap out of the girls.
SQUEAKY: There were like seventeen and eighteen year old girls that were headed towards the penitentiary.
MRR: Just more of Bill's teenaged gal pals.
BILL: That went down the wrong path.
ARTIE: We signed autographs. It was really weird. I actually sang a ballad to one girl as I held her hand and looked into her vacant eyes. It was "Wontcha."
SQUEAKY: That makes sense—it's a love song.
BILL: At least it was when Dave Spazz sang it. What do you think about some of Artie's lyrical changes on some of the material? Somehow "Wontcha Be My Girl" got changed to "Welcome To My World."
MRR: In the end it's all the same. OK, so what about the scene?
(confusion all around)
ARTIE: Scene?
SQUEAKY: I got something to say. I got something to say about the scene. We draw. We got no problems getting shows. But you know we can't even get a (NAME WITHHELD) show. We can't even get into Spazzstock! I think a lot of people have issues with us. I don't know why. I do the splits. What more can you ask?
BILL: It's that time your pants ripped. That's what did it.
SQUEAKY: Other than that everything's great.
BILL: I turn down three shows a week.
ARTIE: They're all in Jersey.
MRR: When's the next big tour?
BILL: I dunno- the states?
SQUEAKY: We'll play Asia!
ARTIE: We'll play Asia covers.

Thank you Shemps! And good luck with that record and choking Squeaky!
The Shemps CD *Spazz Out* is available on Reservation Records check out the website at www.theshemps.com

DEAD STOP

About two years ago I received this great demo in the mail—DEAD STOP from Belgium. Getting a great demo in the mail comes as often as a thank you from your boss—almost never. To my surprise, this demo was a scorcher—great layout, good recording quality and top notch hardcore. It was obviously inspired by 80s US hardcore, more specifically Negative Approach. It definitely caught my attention and I wanted to hear more. A year later, I got their 7" (Wolfpack records), and again, I was totally impressed. As it turns out, about five months ago they asked me if I would be interested in doing the North American press of the new full lengths. Nothing could prepare me for this new recording. Fuck'n *ace* record (out now on Deranged and Complete Control). And now there's talk of a North American tour in fall of 2004 so brace yourself.

interview by Gord Dufresne

MRR: What's Dead Stop about? Lineup, history, and shit?
Gert: We've got Lino on vocals, Michiel on guitar, Coorde on bass, and Gert on drums. Me and Coorde started a band before with Erik Uncontrollable on guitar but that didn't work out, for one or another reason, so we asked Michiel to come and play guitar, since we knew he liked bands like Antidote, DYS, and The Abused. We needed a singer, and some people even applied for it like it was a job or something, but we found Lino with the right attitude and perfect voice!

MRR: Before Dead Stop there was another lineup with Coorde, Gert, Tilburg (now in The Uncontrollable) on guitar, and Packo on vocals. What happened to that lineup? Do you play those songs or are they gone forever?
Gert: As mentioned before, it didn't work out. So we wrote all new songs. I know that The Uncontrollable still play one song that we wrote back then.

MRR: Dead Stop hit it off right away, unlike most of the band members' previous bands. Do you think it's a hardcore rule that you have to struggle in shitty bands first?
Gert: We didn't struggle in shitty bands. As for me, I was in Building, which I don't like anymore now, but we were pretty successful back then. We played some fucking great shows with that band and did two Euro tours. As for Between The Lines, Michiel's other band, it's almost the same thing. It seems like people are starting to appreciate them just now. They still play the NYHC stuff like they used to. It's the kids' taste that changes.

MRR: What's your favorite Dead Stop song so far?
Gert: For me, "Leave Me Alone."

MRR: Has anyone (including band members) ever read the Dead Stop lyrics? What are you going to do if you find out Lino sings about touching little boys?
Gert: We all read the lyrics. And they deal with his personal feelings toward people he hates. So that's cool. If Lino wants to sing about touching little boys, he'll mean beating them up.

MRR: How important is soccer to DS? Are you going to write a song about Jamaican referees?
Gert: We're not writing songs about Jamaicans, not in a negative way. The Bad Brains loved Jamaicans! We will write a song about Brazilians, though.

MRR: You have a 7" coming out on Reflex Records, which means you're going to be on the same label as DYS, Negative FX, GIs, Jerry's Kids. etc. Any news on that yet?
Gert: Yeah! We will tour with those bands! What about that?!? It will be out as you read this!

MRR: Being an asshole is cool these days in hardcore. Which band member is a true asshole?
Gert: People say it's me. I haven't got a slightest idea why, but I can live with that.

MRR: Detroit or Boston hardcore?
Gert: I go for Boston hardcore because more bands came from that area. But almost nothing can beat Negative Approach of course!

MRR: No Reagan=no hardcore. Do you think Belgium would have better bands if the Vlaams Blok was elected?
Gert: Come on, like politics has anything to do with hardcore? Do you think you're interviewing .Calibre??

MRR: Your demo seems to be getting a lot of good feedback from the 'States. How did all this happen so fast?
Gert: Larry and Flex went to the 'States and took some demos with them. People liked us, what can we say? Good PR!

MRR: You recorded a couple of cover songs (Boiling Point, Right Brigade, Reagan Youth) at the demo session. Are those recordings ever going be used?
Gert: These songs are already used. 10 demos have cover songs on them. There will be a CD version of the 7". Maybe a couple of songs will be on there as well.

MRR: Since you're all decent musicians, are you planning on disappointing everyone with a *Fire and Ice* or *How We Rock* style album?
Gert: Definately! In fact, Coorde has already written some riffs for that album. Pit (The Deal) will join us on second guitar for those recordings.

MRR: You guys have an *American Pie* thing going on. Gert totally looks like Stiffler and Coordes' stage presence reminds me of Shitbreak. So, who is the apple pie humper, Lino or Michiel?
Gert: Didn't you invent that?

MRR: So is Lino's mom really hot?
Gert: Maybe you should ask that to some Glue members. And don't even think about it, sick perv!

MRR: Do you guys really have a song about Bart The Flex?
Gert: Yea! So, you're jealous right now? In fact it is the only positive-sounding song we have, lyricwise. We might write a song about you, too, don't worry!!

MRR: Last words, last schmurds?
Gert: I'll see you in hell!

Abi YoYos

The Abi Yo Yos are one most exciting and musically intelligent bands to emerge in of the Bay area for some time. Songs like, "Fuck the UN" showcase the band's musical chops and politically scathing lyrics; "Playground Mutiny" mixes a folk-like verse and thrash chorus; and newer songs like, "Post-Industrial Flood" take them to the heights of art-punk. They currently have a split CD with the Weak Leads that was recorded live on KALX, Berkeley, and they have an upcoming album on SF's Risk records.

The Abi Yo Yos are Shawn, 19, (vocals); Matt, 20, (guitar); Jeff, 21, (bass); and Blain, 17, (drums).

Interview By Rory Smith.

MRR: Where's Blain?

Shawn: He's grounded.

MRR: Really?

Shawn: Naw, but he's always grounded.

MRR: When was it that I first saw you guys play, about a year ago?

Matt: It was post-9/11.

Shawn: Yeah, it was probably August.

MRR: I remember when I saw you play, I was really blown away, but I couldn't really describe your sound to anyone. One thing I kept telling people was, "They're the best band ever!" (Everyone laughs).

Jeff: I tell everyone it's punk with some folk influences.

Shawn: It's not really punk.

MRR: So, when you first founded This Bike is a Bike Bomb, what was that like? (Laughter). Where does the name, "The Abi Yo Yos" come from?

Shawn: Abi Yo Yo was the name of a mythical monster from an African folk tale.

Matt: He was made of rock.

Shawn: Yes, he's a Rock Monster. He used to terrorize villages in Africa.

MRR: Well, that's what you guys do too.

Shawn: They said if you didn't go to bed on time, this monster would eat you. No one really believes that, it's like the boogieman. One day he comes along! Then this magician guy who was exiled came back and defeated the Abi Yo Yo and they let him back into the village. Anyway, to us, our names is a metaphor for Western civilization. We heard of it though a Pete Seger song called, "Abi Yo Yo."

Matt: We were originally called Gutter Snatch.

Shawn: We were called Gutter Snatch for about the first five months.

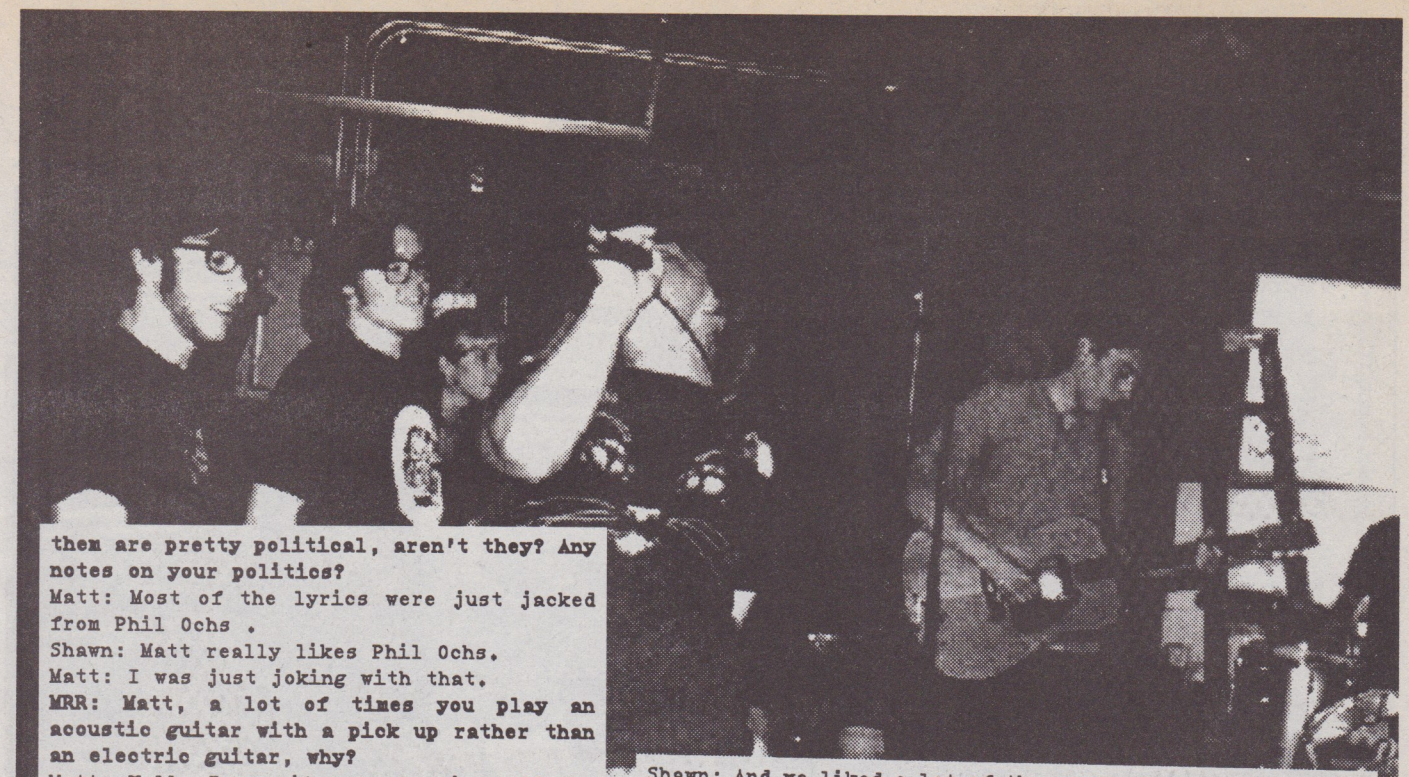
MRR: Thank you for changing that name.

Shawn: Yeah, no shit.

Jeff: Gutter Snatch is *tight*.

Shawn: We only changed it because Guttermouth stole the prefix for that name.

MRR: Matt, you write most of the songs. Most of



them are pretty political, aren't they? Any notes on your politics?
Matt: Most of the lyrics were just jacked from Phil Ochs .
Shawn: Matt really likes Phil Ochs.
Matt: I was just joking with that.
MRR: Matt, a lot of times you play an acoustic guitar with a pick up rather than an electric guitar, why?
Matt: Well, I use it more to give off the idea that we're a folk band.
MRR: Oh, really? So, it's more of a gimmick?
Matt: More of a stage antic.
MRR: You played for a while without a bass player. Why go from having a bass to no bass back to bass again?
Shawn: Our bass player left and went to school, and we got offered to play a show last summer, our first show. So, Matt readjusted some of the chords to make up for the lack of a bass player.
MRR: So, then Jeff joined?
Shawn: There was Ballzack before that; he played New Years at the SPAM warehouse with us. He only knew the bass for two songs, so he played the rest on cardboard cut out of a Hoover vacuum. Then Jeff came in. He was our friend for a long time, we'd played in a lot of bands with Jeff.
MRR: Jeff, what are you into musically? Because, these guys are big folkheads-and by "folkheads," I mean cokeheads.
Jeff: When I was a kid, I listened to the Cars a lot and Tom Petty. I don't know-shit.
MRR: The Offspring it is.
Shawn: I hate all of them.
MRR: I saw you once without your drummer, Blain, where was he?
Shawn: He's grounded a lot. He's still in high school.
MRR: You guys are older than Blain by about two years. How do you know him?
Shawn: Blain used to talk a lot of shit to me. Apparently he really liked our old band, only he didn't know how to express himself. We needed a drummer, we played with him, and sparks flew.
MRR: So the folk element; where does that come from?
Shawn: Matt and me have an appreciation of folk music, Phil Ochs and Pete Seeger.
Matt: And Woody Guthrie.
Shawn: And we liked a lot of the stuff that was being said and wed like a lot of the themes.
MRR: What about punk influences, because you are definitely a punk band.
Shawn: We love the Fleshies and the Phantom Limbs a lot.
Matt: We're into most of the early hardcore stuff, the Replacements too. I'm also into 60s garage, the Fuggs, the MC5.
Shawn: I used to like the Dead Kennedys a lot.
MRR: What's it like being from Mill Valley (a North Bay town near SF).
Matt: It's rough.
Jeff: There's not really much of a music scene in Mill Valley.
Shawn: We spend a lot of the time in the East Bay.
Matt: The main thing I get out of music is meeting people, good people, bad people, maybe even mostly bad people. Music is the only thing I care a whole lot about.
Jeff: Sean and Matt are two of my really good friends, and when they asked me to play with them I was really happy that I got to play music I liked with two of my friends. Shawn: I like performing live a lot. We've been going to shows for a long time and seeing bands and it's nice to think that maybe we can hold our own with them and put on a good
show as well.
MRR: What would you like to accomplish with your band?
Jeff: Make a full length.
Shawn: Yeah an LP.
MRR: Getting back to your lyrics, they are pretty political. Your song "Bad Machine" what's that about?
Matt: To put it kinda simply, it's about not really knowing where your tax money is
going-it's about parents, my parents. You know, good working American
folks, who probably wouldn't agree with a lot of things their tax dollars are going to.
MRR: Do you want to turn people on to politics, kinda like the MC5 did? Do you care if people are completely apolitical?
Matt: I'd like to get people interested in politics, but it's not a goal in my songwriting, though I would say that we are a political band.

Dominatrix

It was a hot summer day in July of 2002 and STS and I were lost in a town outside of Amsterdam called Utrecht. For lack of bicycles, we had our skateboards. I was toting my backpack and my guitar in its burly flight case, somehow keeping my balance, nearly losing my arm from the weight. We skated around the quiet city for close to an hour, stopping to call the club once for directions, then twice to clarify. When we finally found our destination, the bar where we had our first show, it was a relief. I tried to shed my crappy mood, cooling down and drinking some water with the friendly people who greeted us. My life would soon be changed.

Through the huge picture window of the bar I could see a boxy white bread truck arrive. Out of the sliding door poured a driver, a roadie, and four Brazilian women, whom I would soon learn were Dominatrix. The bar owner ordered us Chinese food and we enjoyed it together at a long wooden table in front of the stage. The girls captured my attention immediately with rousing conversation, curiosity about our experiences in the United States, and their own experiences in Brazil.

Dominatrix was the first feminist punk band to emerge from Brazil. Founded by sisters Elisa and Isabella Gargiulo in 1995, it was the start of a revolution once the word got out about the band and their first record Girl Gathering. The profound effect of Dominatrix on the music scene in Brazil could only be compared to the effect Bikini Kill had in the United States. Girl bands were popping up all over and a new wave of feminism flooded the country. I wouldn't really grasp the importance of Dominatrix until I traveled with the Haggard to Brazil in 2003. During that tour they drew 500 people to watch us some nights, a crowd of sweaty, excited fans dancing and singing every English word.

They were a wealth of enthusiastic, fascinating knowledge and I could have talked to them for hours more, but we had a show to play. When they took the stage it felt like a hurricane had hit Utrecht. The energy and passion of their performance left me in awe? joyful and inspired. Not since the days of Team Dresch had I felt my heart explode from the pure happiness and excitement only a person's favorite band can give them.

When we returned home from Europe, STS and I made it our goal to tour with Dominatrix in the United States. Organizing the tour turned out to be very difficult, mostly because the drummer, Debora, was denied a visa twice. Dominatrix found another talented drummer to travel to the States, and the tour turned out to be a huge success. Then, in November of 2003, the Haggard toured in Brazil.
Since we met, Isabella has moved to Milwaukee WI. A one-time rhythm guitarist for the band, Mayra Vescovi, has filled her position as bass player. Dominatrix will be back in the 'States in December 2004 to play the west coast Queercore Blitz tour with my new band, JackQueen, named after a Dominatrix song.

Interview by Emily Kingan

MRR: Elisa, how did you start playing music? Was there something or someone who inspired you and Isabella to start playing music together?

Elisa: I started playing music when I was 11 years old. There was an old guitar in my house and my older brother insisted on playing it to me to prove he could do it, and it was really hard to convince him how uninteresting it was to watch him compose cheesy songs in a language he thought was English. Anyways, I would get the guitar when I could, and try to learn it. My favorite bands were L7 and Joan Jett. Around 1994, me and my sister, Isabella, started playing together in our room, because we wanted to have a girl band. We started writing songs and teaching each other how to make music.

MRR: How long did you and Isabella play in your bedroom before you realized you wanted to start a band together and play shows? What was the process of forming the band like and how did you organize your first show?

Elisa: During that period of about a year, we were looking for other girls to form a band with ads in magazines and flyers in music schools. We never went to any shows at that time; we were only 13 and 14 years old. Having a girl band in Brazil at that time sounded impossible. We hardly had women in mainstream rock. When we finally got the band together, we practiced a lot, made some songs and played our first show in 1996. We didn't know where to go to book shows, but someone told us that one specific pub would let new bands play there. So, we went there and convinced the guy to do an all-girl band night. The problem was that we didn't know other all-girl bands. So we went to this place downtown called Galeria do Rock (it's like a shopping mall that sells records and band stuff) and started asking people if they knew any other girl bands. We found two bands with girl singers (called No Class and No Violence) and finally booked the show.

MRR: What about the others, Mayra, Debora, and Flávia? What were you doing around this time? Were you involved with music then? What was it like when you started to play music? Was it hard to find resources? What inspired you to play?

Mayra: I was probably starting to date my first girlfriend and finding out how hard it was for queer people to be open. I used to be a professional in-line skater and be around guys most of the time. Back then I studied piano, flute, and was beginning to learn guitar, but I had no idea how to form a band or where to find people, especially girls, to play with. My inspiration first of all was my mom. She is a really awesome pianist and an amazing teacher.

Flávia: I started to play music when I was 14, inspired by punk rock bands like the Ramones, and I said "I love that and I wanna do it."

MRR: How did your families and friends react to your desire to play punk rock? It's not exactly "normal" in Brazil to play rock music.

Mayra: Well, since my life has always been weird for them, first of all, because of the kind of sport that I was practicing and the way I dressed back then, my choice was not a surprise at all.

MRR: What was your first show with Dominatrix like? How did the audience receive you?

Elisa: I remember the show as if it were today. March 20, 1996. I turned 16 two days before that. We didn't know exactly what would happen because, as I said, we had never been to or played shows before. Maybe because of the bands involved, it was a really amazing night. People got kinda puzzled because we were really young, but everyone was having a good time. At that show, we met other girls like Alê and Silvana (that now play in Lava) and Carol (from No Class) and we started doing more shows together and meeting other people.

MRR: How did you all meet each other? How did you all end up playing together today?

Elisa: Debora was the drummer of Cosmogonia, a girl punk band I used to play in, so when the first drummer left I invited her to play in Dominatrix.

Mayra: I met Elisa, Isabella, and Debora in '98 at a Dominatrix show. Later I found out that they needed a second guitar and auditioned for the band and got in the band in the end of '98.

Flávia: I met everyone at a Dominatrix show, too. I started to play in Dominatrix in the beginning of 2002. They were looking for a guitarist after Mayra left and I offered myself. They already knew me from my other band, Biggs. I love to play with these girls, they're amazing.

Elisa: And Mayra got back to the band, now playing the bass, after my sister, Isabella, moved to the USA.

MRR: How has the music scene in Brazil changed over the years since the days of the first Dominatrix shows?

Mayra: In my opinion, it has changed a lot. I remember in the late 90s how we had a lot of fights during and after the shows. People had a lot of trouble accepting an all-girl band like Dominatrix, especially one that would be talking about so many polemical subjects. There weren't a lot of girl bands back then and the fact that Dominatrix has always been really political and has a really strong attitude made us suffer a lot of prejudice. For being girls, for being queer, for being good musicians. The changes are visible. Today there are a lot more girl bands, a lot more openly queer people in the rock scene, and a lot more respect. I guess a lot has changed. But I guess that we still have a lot to do, other people to reach, and experiences to share.

Elisa: It seems like today feminism is something that people want to discuss in the punk scene in Brazil, and not something people make fun of, like the men in the scene would do back in 1994 and 1995. Now, in the political punk scene, it's considered "ignorant" to say feminism is not necessary. People are more aware of women's problems in the scene and in the world. But it doesn't mean all the boys are being respectful with the girls. As we all know, it's really hard to get rid of sexism and boys are not willing to give up their privilege. But now girl bands can play and be heard because of the girl scene. In my opinion, they can be heard mainly because we all built this powerful girl scene and not because boys got nicer and more respectful. Actually, our main priority was always to encourage girls, not teach the boys how to be respectful. We wanted a girl scene and not a feminist boy scene.

MRR: How has Dominatrix changed over the years?
Elisa: Musically, we've changed a lot, because we got older and our musical taste changed, so we changed. The feminist message at the beginning was really simple, riot grrrl style, mainly "Go girl!" lyrics. Because that was what we thought was necessary, because people in the scene had never heard of feminism at that time. And then we started writing more complex feminist lyrics for *Self Delight*, the second album (1998).
MRR: How do people usually react to women playing loud and aggressive music in Brazil?
Elisa: In the mainstream scene, every time women try to be loud and aggressive, people tend to be really sexist and homophobic towards them. We only had two out lesbian feminist rockers in Brazil: Cássia Eller, who unfortunately died a while ago, and Vange Leonel, who now is an amazing writer and our good friend. All the other mainstream rockers don't publicly consider themselves feminists because it would be even worse than just being loud and aggressive. The music industry here thinks that feminism and politics can ruin the selling of records. The mainstream musicians that are considered "political" by the population usually sing about how bad is it to live in a poor country with lots of corruption. This is a valid message, but this is the only message these artists sing about and the only one the industry thinks doesn't ruin the profits. I don't get why they think it's like that. The problem with bootlegging made it worse for them. You can buy fake CDs on the streets for about $3, so each year the profits for official CDs go down, down, down. Mainstream musicians and the whole record industry are in a huge crisis, so they don't feel like risking their profits by being political. It's ironic, because if they made political statements the government wouldn't care, which is totally unusual for the dictatorship here in Brazil. I don't think the fans would care either, no matter how politically alienated they are. Maybe they fear the media, or any kind of public disagreement.
Mayra: I guess that in the rock scene it changed along the years, but still, average people have a lot of difficulties accepting girls in this kind of role. Most of the people feel threatened by that or think that we are on stage to be a sexy girl band for the regular white, straight man.
Flávia: Some people still say, "You guys are great! You play like men!" and
This is so the worst thing ever! But at the same time I know that it is part of the feminist struggle to keep on fighting against sexism showing what women can do whatever a man can do. It doesn't mean we play like men, it means we know how to play our instruments and we play like strong and powerful women.
MRR: What are some of the things you feel could improve within the music scene in Brazil?
Flávia: More female bands, more clubs to play at.
Mayra: I think that one of the most important changes would be the gathering of groups. We still have a lot of separatism, especially within the feminist/queer scene.
Elisa: Artists should try to be more courageous and aware, and the industry should be less scared of politics. I particularly know some artists because I work as a musical journalist to pay my bills. Of course, only some of them are interested in politics. Whenever I have to interview them about political events, it's a total disaster. The Brazilian people listen to the artists more than anyone else. Knowing that the public opinion is constructed by lots of alienated artists is scary but it's true. Artists should try to be brave and smart again, like in the '60s and '70s, when lots of artists went to jail because they would sing against the dictatorship here in Brazil. Even these artists from the past are really politically lazy nowadays, like all the guys from the *Tropicália* movement. It's filthy and it reaffirms musical rebellion as a "youth thing." It makes me really angry.
MRR: What was your impression of Europe and the United States when you toured there?
Flávia: I really enjoyed it. Our country has no tradition of rock'n'roll music. I think maybe is easier to be a rocker in other places rather than here for many reasons. I like to be on tour.
Elisa: When we toured Europe on the first half of it we played for a different audience that we are used to. We played the first five shows with two crust punk bands and the people that went to the show were European crust punks. They liked the fact that we were from Brazil but most of them didn't like the music so much, and I don't remember seeing lots of girls in the audience. The second part of the tour, we played with The Haggard and it was awesome. We could see more girls at the shows and the cultural exchange was better. We did our last show closing Ladyfest Amsterdam and it was amazing, both organizers and girls that attended the show were awesome and deeply interested in exchanging experiences. The US was great, too. The Haggard organized it and it was the best tour experience in my life so far. It was really interesting to see all those girl rock scenes in different cities and learn how they do things independently. I learned a lot. But I also learned that some people in the US punk scene in general don't know so much about South America and especially Brazil, which is really alarming because we are deeply exploited by US government. I noticed that in the US and Europe, it's easier to be punk because of the economic situation. We have no dumpsters with free food here, no bike lanes, government doesn't give us money if we're unemployed and if we lose our job the minimum time to find another one is six months. It's really interesting that the richer the country, is the more developed the punk scene is. I noticed that to be the "pure punk" with the "Fuck my job" attitude, you have to live in a rich country. In Europe, people would ask us why we had no squats in Brazil with that superior look on their faces. I felt extremely offended. The question is funny because a huge percentage of the population in Brazil lives in squats, called *favelas*, that don't register on the punk radar because the people who live there don't look like "punks," they're just really poor people who don't have any other choice.
MRR: What do you each do besides making music? What else inspires you?
Elisa: Recently, I founded Dykon Records with my girlfriend Kerby and we are releasing some new girl bands. I have a collective called Artemisia and we're producing this big feminist internet portal. I am also recording a documentary about women in the rock industry in Brazil.
Mayra: I am a photographer and I do lots of different kinds of art on paper.
Flávia: I'm a sociologist and a teacher, and now I'm working on the Young Feminists' participation at the *10th Encontro Feminista Latino Americano e do Caribe*, a feminist convention for people from Latin America and the Caribbean, that will happen in São Paulo, Brazil, in October 2005.
MRR: What are your goals in life, personally and with the band?
Mayra: My goal is to be able to express myself in all the ways I can find and be able to fight for everything that I believe.
Elisa: I want to keep on being part of the growth of this strong, big, politically aware, and creative girl scene in Brazil. Personally, I would like to make a living doing only things connected to feminism and playing music, but this seems impossible in Brazil. But it doesn't mean I'm gonna stop trying.
MRR: What are you most proud of your band for?
Mayra: For all the courage and persistence to keep fighting for all these years despite of all the prejudice.
Elisa: Making more girls defend themselves in a healthy way and with an energetic hardcore girl band as the soundtrack.
Flávia: I love playing in a band that takes on feminism as a flag. The music is a perfect way to transmit a good message, especially for young people.

Bending the Equator *is a documentary movie of the 2003 Dominatrix tour with the Haggard in the United States. Dominatrix CDs and* Bending the Equator *are available from 16 Records: www.16records.net and Chainsaw Records: www.chainsaw.com*

NO FUCKER

Interview and photos by Dave Hyde

MRR: Why do people hate you so much?
Johnny Underage: Dude, I don't fuckin' know why anyone hates us!
JJ: I think that's for other people to figure out. I don't know why people hate us. I thought we were really nice, but I guess we're just really asshole jerks.
MRR: Well, you have glasses, so you can't be that mean.
JJ: If we moved to Portland, everyone would be cumming all over the place about us, but since we're from Utica, NY, where no good bands have ever been from, everyone hates us. I can understand that we're playing a style that appeals mainly to a very specific target demographic: Japanese people! There's actually a flyer that says "Big in Japan" under our name!
MRR: You two started out in DEATHBAG, who didn't get good until your last two songs. How did you make the progression from the start of the band to those last recordings, and again from the first No Fucker demo to your current sound?
JJ: DEATHBAG was just retarded pre-schoolers learning how to play their instruments and how to play in a punk band. None of us, besides me, had ever played in a punk band. We didn't really know what we were doing. I'd never played drums in a real hardcore band before. I'd always played guitar. I didn't know what was going on. No Fucker's sound came from us saying we want to sound like this and we're going to do it no matter what, even if it means people pigeonhole us. Even if it means people say we're a clone band or whatever.
MRR: The thing is, you started out as a clone band. The first demo is a lot like DISCLOSE, but what you're playing now is nothing like that. What you're playing now is something more original.
Johnny Underage: We found what we're looking for and it's still progressing. We've gone from figuring out what we wanted to sound like in the beginning to taking it for our own, even if it's a DISCHARGE riff or a JEZUS AND THE GOSPEL FUCKERS riff. It becomes our own, like we wrote that riff. It's not like we're just stealing a riff and playing it, adding new words like any other band does. This is our sound and this is what we do.
JJ: Before, if we liked something, we'd say, "Let's do something like that". We didn't study how they did things. We made a conscious effort to steal from them and not really make the thing our own. Now, we study other bands. We try to figure out what makes them so powerful. Even if we steal a riff from Discharge or Jezus and the Gospel Fuckers, we steal the riff and try to make it our own riff. It comes from the heart. We steal from the heart.
Johnny Underage: There's this book that Dan Milman wrote called *Body Mind Master*. You can ask JJ cause he'll come over and see me watching BROKEN BONES and DISCHARGE videos. I'm studying Bones, the way he plays, and in Milman's book, it's mostly about sports, but applies to any part of life, he says that if you find someone or something that does what you want to do, study it to the fullest and look like it, act like it, believe it, and you'll become it.
JJ: Not just punk rock, but as far as our lives go, anything we do we try to do with the utmost intensity.
Johnny Underage: I think DSB taught us that.
JJ: DSB changed our attitudes. Well, not changed but solidified our attitudes and made us believe in ourselves. We could be a great band. Watching them made me open my heart up.
MRR: On that subject, you guys set up an East Coast tour for DSB last year. How did that come about?
Johnny Underage: DSB's original plan was to play Portland, then fly to NYC and then fly home. We convinced them with many emails that playing three gigs on the East Coast would be great!
JJ: It was awe-inspiring to play with DSB. Maybe we weren't ready to play with them, we sucked, but they insisted. The tour was a complete success, DSB even made more than their plane ticket money back even after paying FAR the money they originally insisted they wouldn't need.

Johnny Underage: DSB decided that they were going to come and tour the East Coast and they said, "No Fucker has to play with us." But we needed a bass player, so we taught Adam the songs.

MRR: You have a new bass player now, right? What happened with Adam and how did his replacement come to join the band?

JJ: Our old bass player, Adam, was the person that sent us an email three years ago about how we weren't punk and "probably haven't even sold one record," *but he was the one with the care bear collection!* I got fed up with his antics and pulled a knife on him one day and he's not in the band today.

Johnny Underage: Our replacement bassist, Fangboner #5, is named Monday and he joined the band just by asking us when he was wicked drunk. He passed the drunken test before he passed out on a pair of John's dirty underwear.

MRR: You have strong ties to the Japanese punk scene. How did you come to know a lot of Japanese punks? Why are you so attached to the Japanese scene/music?

Johnny Underage: We just wrote them, it's that simple. Who doesn't like Japanese HC/Punk?! Yamatto Damishe!!!

MRR: Deathbag and No Fucker have toured a lot in the last few years, but haven't necessarily stuck to the rules about which towns to play and not to. What are some of the better and more interesting places you guys have toured through?

JJ: The best place we've ever played was some pop punk show at a small town in West Virginia. There were all these retarded kids in wheelchairs sitting behind us when we played. Afterwards, John said, "What was up with all those fuckin' assholes sitting behind us!?" He didn't realize they were retarded.

MRR: You guys are from Utica, New York. Why don't you have the brains to get out of Utica? Why are you trying desperately to start a scene in Utica? And how are you doing that?

JJ: It's really none of that. We're not trying to start a scene. We just like to eat burritos at the burrito place there. We really can't see moving anywhere else. The guy who runs the burrito place, his mom ran that chain restaurant Ninfa's in Texas. After that business got sold, he moved to upstate New York so we just love it there. We don't give a shit about the scene or anything. But speaking of which, it is sort of important to us to make sure that for kids getting into punk, there is a punk scene for them to find if they need it. Because when I was growing up, I had a hell of a time. I had no friends until…well, I still don't have any friends, but I want to make sure that it's available for other people growing up.

Johnny Underage: We live in Utica because it doesn't cost us $800 a month to live. We can get by with little work and it gives us a lot of time to do what we like to do and play music. We just bought a building and yeah, maybe we are trying to start a scene. I don't know what we're trying to do, but we bought a building. We're gonna have shows and hopefully people will come play in Utica. We have seven years of debt before we can go anywhere.

MRR: You've been doing a lot to build up the scene in Utica, including helping open an all-ages space and a record store. What made you so motivated to do that? How do you have the resources to do that?

JJ: We were motivated to open up our own live house and record store after basically being shut out of everywhere else! Fuck 'em! I'd love to say that we're motivated by a sharp business sense and that we foresaw huge profits being made off of this, but then I would lose my punk cred. "We're not into money, man." Actually, I plan on making a fuckload of money.

Johnny Underage: We really *don't* have the resources to do this. Massive loans, mortgages etc. are the way we're doing it, plus a little help from the young punx in town providing free labor! Here's to the "young white slaves"!

MRR: No Fucker has been a band for over a year and has two demos out but no records. In an era when most bands are putting out records of their demos that were recorded at their third practice, why are you waiting so long to do a record?

Johnny Underage: The records aren't important, the live gigs are what's important. When we cut a record finally, it will be the best raw fuckin' punk record from the USA.

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Mission Records

By Mike Louie

Perhaps the most obvious sign of the failure of Mission Records in its final days was huddled amongst other texts in a cardboard box buried underneath empty 40oz bottles, a white book with crisp, bold red lettering on the cover that read *Run Your Own Business: From Raising the money to counting the profits.* Well, maybe *failure* is too strong of a word, but in a strictly financial sense that's really what it was—a failed business that somehow inadvertently stumbled into its reputation as a space of some notoriety. And *"counting the profits"* is one thing for sure Mission Records never did. If anything the store must be eligible for some sort of meritorial certificate for Least Efficiently Run Business, Most Uncited Fire Code Violations and the Perserverence Award. The mere fact that the place existed for nearly six years in bumbling decay as a haunted house, a punk show space, a death trap, a resource center, a hideaway, a gloomy drug den, a beacon, is, at its end, worthy of some sort of record.

So this is to be the obituary, the end of Mission Records, the drug addled mayhem, the dark and spooky doings. If there were to be any kind of final closure to the place there would be some happier people in the world, not the least being the upstairs neighbors who, during the first show in this space, claimed Ringwurm and Reina Aveja were making their baby's crib bounce across the room like a rat stuck in a glue trap. Owner Adam White would also be pleased to know that the ship has set anchor so he can actually start counting the debt he owes on the place—even though in his opinion, Mission Records hasn't actually been THE Mission Records for a couple years. He says now it's more like the scab Dukes of Hazzard, the fake Bo and Luke, or cousins of theirs or whatever. And to further this point Adam adds, "I mean, there isn't even a bong in Mission Records anymore."

But maybe as of this writing the space isn't completely dead. Its new identity meanders around like one of those horribly poisoned commercial freighters so systemically contaminate that are forced to sail the oceans on the earth forever because no half wise port will take them in. Adam will thankfully be set free in October, after accruing massive debts from the space, owing bills to everyone from his parents, collection agencies and drug dealers. And drug dealers aren't the kind of bill collectors you want knocking on your gate at 10pm. So Adam is off, free from any kind of physical ties to the place, anyway, free to live a real life. Everyone else, the old Mission Records members are gone, too: Buzz, Matty, Matt Powell, Chris Myers, Chris Pink, Melissa, countless bands and countless characters. "All these people were a big part of it and then they disappeared," Adam told me. "The whole record is gone. And I was so fucking wasted for a lot of it I don't remember a lot. I have big blank spots. It's crazy. But that was the nature of the whole thing though—it was so crazy and so cool that you can't even remember it."

In fact the oldest member still here is Chicken, the tough, fat headed cat that I swear must be half bobcat, who's been here since Mission Records moved from its original location at 2458 Mission. Chicken gets a lot of action, I can tell. I mean, have you ever seen the size of his balls?

A HISTORY LESSON

Mission Records moved to its current location between 18th and 19th on Mission Street in 1998, after their previous landlord began identifying with the dot com boom (and subsequent bust) and decided her place would be better suited to the yuppie scum that infested the city during that time. It was an important time back then, because as the yuppies moved in and gentrification spread like wildfire, most of the show spaces were on their way out of San Francisco's Mission District. "This went from one of the most, fucking bitchin' music neighborhoods and places in the world to just fucking nothing," Adam says. "The Commotion, the Capp Street Warehouse, Star Cleaners, the Chameleon, the Tip Top, the fucking Kilowatt, the fucking Epicenter, all of them closed or stopped doing shows."

So Mission Records moved into an old bar in the middle of the block, a place that for the last fifty years had been nothing but a bar. The previous incarnation of the space was El Siete De Oros, a Hispanic bar known best for insane crowds (the landlord said he couldn't even reach the bar to get a beer through the crowd at night), tons of coke, a secret room, heavy La Eme involvement, lots of gang activity (some people said they wouldn't walk by the bar at night) and a supposed multiple homicide allegedly carried out by members of the Cuban Mafia, depending on who you ask. It was also used in a scene in *48 Hours*. Either way, the place already had a lengthy legacy that contributed a swarmy kind of atmosphere before it became Mission Records.

By that time Adam and Chris Myers had already decided what was most important were the shows, and the store, while not exactly secondary, was somewhat less exciting for them. The first show at the old space happened more out of default through local kids Matt Shapiro and Matty Luv who set up a benefit show for youth outreach and the needle exchange. Iggy from the Onion Flavored Rings remembers this about the first show: "It was hugely packed and you could sit on the steps across the street on the bank and drink. There was just tons of vomiting. I just remember at the old store you always had to carry people out of there." From that point on Adam says it was all about the shows, and with the scene shrinking with frequent closures and gentrification, Mission Records quickly became a kind of vital entity—something desperately needed in the neighborhood . Hundreds of bands played shows in the dank and sweaty showspace in the back, on the tiny stage propped up by old tires and piss bottles, a box fan that would shock you if you touched it, and a shitty PA. The space breathed a life back into what could've easily become an empty scene, but that wasn't exactly intentional.

The store was losing money from the moment it moved into the new space. Adam carved out rooms and living spaces out of what was previously one big hall and a balcony, found roommates in Billy and Chris Myers and moved in to help shore up rent. It wasn't enough and Adam went to his parents for help. "I was like, 'This is the only space for all ages shows and all kinds of important shit goes on here and kids who have no place to go can come here and stay and get drunk and that needs to happen

in the world and your money is paying for it,'" he says. "And they were like 'Well, we understand,' and I was kind of surprised. I basically took a bunch of money from them they'll never get back." The space itself was busy carving out its own identity as a kind of a free for all, a place where it didn't seem to matter that they didn't really know how to run a business, or care even. While 924 Gilman was an organized collective with set rules and boundaries, Mission Records was a whirlwind, a tornado of punk rock and sweaty bodies, feverish dreams of booze and drugs.

"I remember one of the guys who booked Gilman came over here and I was hanging out with him the backyard and of course I was fucking wasted and he was sober. We were trying to talk about the contrast between the two places and how they had this sort of organized, cooperative and they had these rules and they were very concerned about the politics and about keeping a positive image and maintaining this community thing. And we were like 'Fuck that, man.' It was just like this whole different way of doing things. Partially it was about being political versus sort of... not political? And by not political I mean more like, I always thought, 'This is what anarchy is like.' Do whatever the fuck you want as long as you don't fuck me over, I'm not going to trip out. And I'm certainly not going to worry about what the cops or other people think." –Adam

The fact that Mission Records sold drugs out of the space was never that far under the radar. Random hood rats and junkies occasionally come in to this day looking for speed or a rig. But the scale to which the store depended on drugs was enormous—estimates of the total amount of money spent buying drugs, selling drugs and doing drugs range into the hundreds of thousands of dollars. For two years the store ran almost solely on drug money, and while everyone had little problem justifying selling drugs to keep the space afloat, the operation, like most drug operations, became dangerously sketchy, filled with a steady flotsam of shady characters and an even darker aura settled on the place. "It kind of gave us the feeling that we were outlaws and we were really making the fucking business work, because we weren't making it work," Adam says. "But then on the other hand, we started bringing sketchy motherfuckers in here, we started smoking *so* much weed and eventually we started losing control of the whole thing." The shows continued to be a massive, roiling ball of energy in a sweaty, tiny room, but Adam was beginning to burn out and began giving Buzz and Matt Powell more control over the store. Both Buzz and Matt Powell lived in the store around that time, Buzz in the upstairs on the former balcony and Matt in a loft in one of the small rooms on the bottom floor.

"My fondest memories are really when we were on the edge and just totally sketched out and scared. Just in a position of, 'Ok, the power's turned off. We need a thousand dollars today to turn it back on.' Just going out and hustling up drug money, bartering with the community—like making money out of dirt, you know? Like for a six-month period it was like total madness. It was largely hustling in various ways; either it was drugs or bartering, shit that was kind of shady." —Matt Powell

The fact that they daily risked the whole operation just by keeping the store open guaranteed that Mission Records couldn't continue to run this way. But there was also the sense of hustling and scamming to keep the place alive, a romantic sort of appeal. "The store was a total free-for-all at that point," says Will, who was living upstairs at the time. "It was mainly drugs: drug dealing, drug doing… certain people who were living here like bringing prostitutes in here. It wasn't the greatest situation to live in if you were trying to stay clean or keep away from that. It was like they were trying to burn out as quickly and brightly as possible."

In March 2001 the rent money went missing, and there were few questions about where it went and who took it. The question of whether the money was stolen (probably) or borrowed (not likely) was irrelevant. What mattered was that the store was in deep shit. Buzz took over the store for Adam, who'd all but removed his name from the lease. So the ship was baled for the time being—it was always slowly sinking, but the missing money started a major shift in Mission Records. Drugs were out, it was obviously too sketchy to begin with but now the tolerance for them just wasn't there. The junkies and the tweakers weren't welcome anymore, but excavated from the cave of the record store and pushed somewhere else. "That was around when Buzz started to kick people out, like trying to get rid of the drug elements, which was me," Matt Powell says. But it was others too, and removing the heavy drug influence at the store had two effects: one was that Mission Records was cleaner, in figurative, atmospheric sense, but it slowly shifted to something else, something not Mission Records anymore. It was evolving from that primal, chaotic soupy mixture of boiling seas of gigantic insects, the Land of the Lost, but drugs and chaos were always two factors that surrounded, enveloped and had epitomized the space until that point (along with long lasting and effervescent misery), and with them gone it wasn't really Mission Records anymore. And when Matty Luv from Hickey overdosed and died in the fall of 2002, drugs were completely banned (I don't believe alcohol was ever considered a drug). The second effect of removing the drug element was that the ghosts quieted down.

When we moved into the upstairs it triggered the ghosts; we invaded their space. The way I figured it, the ghosts were here, and whenever people inhabited a section of the store, they moved somewhere else. When we moved into the store they moved upstairs. When we moved upstairs, they moved up front. And when Buzz moved in the front they really started going crazy. And when I lived in my room I had a loft above the door and I can swear one night I was pushed out of the loft. Like I woke up in mid-air. That was like a nine-foot fall onto a concrete floor. —Matt Powell

The ghosts lived here longer than anyone. Nobody really knows where they came from and what makes them appear, but I suspect from out of all the stories surrounding El Siete De Oros, that the ghosts came from there. Terrible things like murders and rapes in the bathroom supposedly went on there in the midst of a popular Hispanic bar that was literally overflowing with business. The evidence they left behind when the business closed in 1995 was

bullet holes (and bullets) in the wall, drinks still half full on the counter, a fully stocked bar, a secret room with the bucket and the rope dangling from the window down to the alley, a meat grinder and a 50 gallon drum (they didn't serve food there) and a rough patch of cement in the backyard—like something evil happened there and everyone had just run out of there one day. Billy was the first one to sleep in the empty space, and all he would say about the first night was, "I definitely wasn't alone."

But other people have seen them. There's a blue man and a blue woman. A yellow ghost wearing a jacket who would come out of Matt Powell's old room and walk into the show space. An evil black thing that would appear in the show room near the kitchen. A demon that would crawl up through the piping. A mosh pit that would break out upstairs. The heavier the drug element, the more active the ghosts became and it probably hit its peak when Matt Powell tried an amateur séance to get rid of them. "I remember coming out of my room just feeling like something was really wrong, just really fucked up," Buzz says. "I looked downstairs and saw Matt chanting with all these candles and looked through the grate [into the upstairs] and just saw all these lights and eyes spinning around. I kept yelling at him, like 'Stop it! They're going fucking nuts!'"

Buzz took the helm but already it was doomed. Years of neglect, bad decisions, the bad luck of a haunted house and shitty records nobody really wanted to buy had left the store dead in the water—it was already too late. All the chaos and whirlwind that had once pointed to the store going out in a blaze of glory had now guided its end to a fizzle, though that was still some time off. And the problems that plagued the store since the beginning were systemic—getting rid of the drugs or quieting the ghosts weren't the easy fix.

"The problem with this place is that it's never been run as a business," Buzz says. "It's always been run as a punk clubhouse and that's important. But what everyone fails to see is that you kind of have to play the game if you want the business to survive. And being the retarded punk rockers that we were, both Adam and I and every one else, it was like 'Yeah, we're not going to play that game. We're going make this rad place that we always dreamed of when we were 17-year-old skateboarder kids listening to the Misfits.'"

The final months of Mission Records saw a lot of shows and a return to the drunken mayhem of earlier years. People started giving each other homemade Mission Records tattoos, which they soon may or may not, or maybe even already, regret. One tattoo makes the store look like the town jail in some old Western, the kind of building where you could tear down a wall and escape with just a horse and a rope. The influx of bands was largely international and there was almost a glimmer that the newer and more mature version of Mission Records might stick around. It was around this time that I started asking people if this place was worth saving, or if it should just be put out of its misery like a crippled racehorse and sent packing for the glue factory. "It's just now that Mission Records is coming around," Ivy (from Allergic to Bullshit) told me. "In the last three weeks there's been bands from all over the world coming, there was the band from Brazil and the bands from Japan. I talked to some guy who found out about it just through word of mouth in Australia, and he was just coming to see the show. People from South America, bands coming from China—I mean it's larger than life now. It's a space for more than just San Francisco and that's a big deal."

"This place is like world famous as far as music goes," says PRJ, who's been around for 500 years and then forever. "Bands from all around the world have played here from like Sweden, Spain, Finland, Italy, Japan, Mexico and this weekend we have bands playing here from Beijing, China. It would be a sorely, sorely missed place. It would be considerable blow to the punk scene and the DIY underground scene in the City. This place is the only place in San Francisco where the kids can feel free."

Punk Rock Jim, Ivy, I'm sorry I made you answer that question. And everyone else. But it points to the store's significance in a city that, although it's not as bad as it used to be, is still starving for a stable space where these things like shows and community and strategic planning can happen. One of the most weighty things someone said to me was when I asked Iggy about favorite times at the store. "The show that was supposed to be the fifth anniversary show, the day that Matty died, was such an intense day. And this place was the focus for everybody; like everybody knew to come here and this was the place for people to be together. And I think this was a sign that this place was really important to people in a way."

Which is true, but at the same time it isn't as if the store didn't have its chances. The fact is a combination of what Buzz said, that the store was never run as a business—and in a way, it never was meant to. It was meant to be run as the punk rock clubhouse, the half-ass collective, "like youth industry," as Iggy says. Nobody was supposed to know where the ship was heading, except that eventually it would sink and by the time people started realizing, with all this unequal and schizophrenic flux of energy being put into Mission Records, that it had actually achieved something of non-ignoble record, that the place started changing into something other than Mission Records. That isn't to say Adam didn't have high hopes for the place as he told me, "I felt really good about it, I was really proud about it. I felt like I was doing something right and I was doing something righteous." But when the realization hit that Mission Records had come into its own as a valuable community space, different people had assumed different roles with different visions for the store and what it should be and no one really put in the effort to bring those ideas to fruition. It was still hard work keeping it afloat and whatever the original intentions, the process changed the store.

The other factor is, as PRJ told me, "There's no money in punk rock, if it's real punk rock."

Melissa will probably hate me for using this quote, but I think it's right on. Besides, the last time we got drunk I wrestled her to the ground and kicked her ass like woah. So I'm not too worried. "This place has been through fucking everything… rats, the plague, drugs, debt… a lot of fucking heartache and tragedy and a lot of good. It made drunkards of us all. The store's been through so much. And that's why I think it's a good time for it to go to bed." Good night.

CAREER SUICIDE

Maybe you haven't heard of Career Suicide. As fiscally reasonable as it may be, living in a cave with your fingers in your ears could pose some problems with regard to hearing one of the best hardcore/punk bands of this post-9/11 world. This interview was conducted by Mantooth and Intense Andy one delightful evening in the streets of Pittsburgh.

MRR: So go down the line and tell us what you do in Career Suicide.

Jonah: I play guitar.

Martin: As little as possible.

Matt: I play bass.

Jesse: I try to play drums.

MRR: So when did Career Suicide start and how did you get together?

Jonah: This incarnation of Career Suicide started in late 2001, and it spawned from an almost completely different version of the band with the same name. I used to play in a band called Bored of Education with Martin and Jesse. I went away one summer and they started a band called Fuck Jonah in my honor.

Martin: It definitely wasn't in your "honor."

Jonah: Ok, in my *dishonor*. So I came back and, after an extended germination of my musical skills, lurked in the scene while Martin and some other scabs formed Career Suicide. Martin moved to Vancouver and it sort of fell apart, which is where I come in, setting the stage for the Career Suicide we now know.

Martin: But soon afterwards, I moved back. And like Stalin with the trains, I reorganized, rebuilt, and whipped these weaklings into shape and, in the meantime, had a half-dozen drummers and bassists sent to a Siberian *gulag*. So, now that I've single-handedly pulled it all together, I can afford to do as little as possible. I basically just cash checks these days.

MRR: The sound you guys have right now, I guess you could say, is a little different than what a lot of bands are currently doing.

Jonah: I'm not sure what to attribute that to. I mean, as far as hardcore goes, your guess at our influences is probably as good as anything we could tell you, so what hardcore bands we listen to might not be at the root. A lot of people are content with putting out records for the sake of having a record out, which, despite our rather cluttered release catalogue, isn't really what I want to do anymore. I want to make sure that our records aren't disposable. The 'notes and chords mean nothing to me' creed only works for so long, until you start repeating yourself (or someone else) and boring your audience. Although, in this style especially (considering hardcore punk is a pretty narrow genre as far as progression goes), there will always be room for musical aping, I'm slowly trying to weed that out. This doesn't mean that we're going to change drastically and not be a punk band anymore; just that Career Suicide is Career Suicide and hopefully not just some anachronistic novelty.

(*Interview temporarily interrupted by drunken transient, DJ Huber.*)

Martin: I think our sound is largely influenced by the variety of bands we listen to. The music we play inevitably reeks of '81-'82 hardcore, but the formula isn't as simple as just putting on the *American Youth Report* comp and mimicking a style. This is probably going to sound more calculated than I intend it to, but the roots of early hardcore punk are just as much of an influence on our band. Listening to rock 'n' roll from the 50s, psych/garage from the 60s, and proto-punk from the 70s is as much a part of our musical diets as the early music of the Adolescents or Agnostic Front. I'd cite *Killed By Death* bands like the Stimulators, the Kids, and the Lewd as influences as quickly as I would the Circle Jerks, Zero Boys, FU's, or Koro.

In fact, I'd go so far as to say that we owe a lot of our sound to bands like the Count Five, Music Machine, and the Sonics. The secret to my voice however, and thus the Career Suicide Sound (TM), is that at puberty my testicles actually ascended rather than descended.

MRR: Since we are complete nerds, we noticed that your

records were released in a different order than they were recorded.

Matt: Very perceptive! [*Laughter*]

Martin: Well, the actual order of our releases goes: First recorded was the demo, obviously, which appeared on vinyl a year later on the *Toronto Omnibus* compilation. Before that was released, however, we went into a studio to record our LP. That LP then sat on the shelves for a while. With summer touring looming in the meantime, we recorded for Kangaroo records. The result was our first proper release, a self-titled 7" distributed out of Amsterdam. Within four months we had our second record, the *SARS* EP, recorded and available. The release of this record coincided with our tour of Europe in the summer of 2003. That tour also marked the first time that the LP was available. The covers hadn't yet been printed, so we brought with us a hundred "test pressings." Upon our return, we decided that the mix, as well as the mastering job, wasn't really up to par, and went back into the studio to re-record all of the bass tracks, add some guitar layers, and fix up some of the vocals. The LP eventually saw proper release by the fall of 2003. Currently, our split LP with Jed Whitey will be available by May or June, as well as a CD of our releases to date.

MRR: What label is that going to be on?

Jesse: Deranged.

MRR: Have you guys toured the US completely yet?

Martin: It's funny considering we've been a functioning band for nearly three years, have toured a handful of times, and even traveled great distances to do so, but we have hardly played any shows. It's the usual excuse–with work/school schedules interfering, as well as limited resources, it's a bit difficult for us to organize tours more extensive than a few days or weeks at a time. We've played a handful of shows through western and northern Europe, play semi-regularly throughout the northeastern United States, but have never had opportunity to play in Canada, outside of Toronto and Montreal.

MRR: So what was the reasoning behind the *SARS* EP? I know you guys live in Toronto, ground zero.

Martin: Obviously it was Polio!

MRR: Dude, someone at Pitt came up with the cure for polio! Jonah Salk!

Jesse: Yep, that's him! (*Pointing at Jonah*)

Jonah: I had to change my name because of all the publicity. We'd come out and I'd say, "Hey we're Career Suicide," and all these kids would be like, "Hey, cure my polio!" and I would just be like "*Fuck you, I just want to play in my band!!!*"

Martin: We kept having all these sick people flock to our shows expecting to get healed. At first it seemed novel, but it just wasn't easy to keep up the energy level–you know, it's hard to get a wild 'punk rock' reaction out of your audience when everyone is hunched over a cane or strapped to a wheelchair.

MRR: So people thought you were Jesus or something?

Jonah: Yeah, but more because of my ability to masturbate in public without anyone seeing me.

Martin: There's talk that Career Suicide might get to play live on a special edition of the *700 Club*. Since Jonah removed a lump from Pat Robertson's colon, we've become his favorite new band.

MRR: So anyway, did you guys have trouble coming to the US during the whole SARS epidemic?

Martin: Just a little. We were kept in body suits. We even had to perform under a sealed bubble at shows!

Jonah: I had my toe removed because they suspected it was infected.

Martin: It was up my ass anyway, so they had to remove it to complete their examinations at the US border.

MRR: So I noticed that you guys so far have only included lyrics to the song "Quarantined" in your records. Why is that?

Jesse: It's because Martin doesn't even know the words.

DJ: Sounds like Esperanto! You are using semantics and innuendo!

Matt: No, no, no. We're anti-semantic! (*Laughter*)

MRR: Ok, so Fucked Up was here a few weeks ago, and I know Toronto has the zine *Equalizing Distort* and some radio shows. How the is scene up there? Are there any bands us Americans should know about?

Jonah: Toronto's alright. It's somewhat deceptive, though. There are these flagship bands that everyone points to, for example Fucked Up, Career Suicide, Haymaker, etc., which leads to assumptions about things being exciting and active. Not quite the case. Toronto is fertile at the moment, in that the consistent inbreeding of band members that normally goes on is at an all-time low, with new bands that have no current members of any other band popping up. Terminal State are a new band of teenagers who are a real good hardcore band, Tower of Silence, aka Bastardizer, are a bunch of clean older people doing a d-beat thrash metal band, Esteban and The Endless Blockades are playing heavy thrash like the early/mid-90s power violence acts, The Bayonettes are up and coming and from what I hear are doing a late-70s power pop/punk thing. Fertile, the key word is fertile.

Martin: Toronto also has the problem of no all-ages venues. Not to mention, there are some terribly restrictive anti-smoking laws that keep younger kids out of a lot of shows. No matter what, to get into any venue that allows smoking, even if only in designated areas, you must be at least 18 years of age. There is a very small crop of young kids who are "in-the-know" enough to get snuck into these shows, but the larger population can't. So most kids who develop an interest in punk aren't able to take the logical step of attending shows and are ultimately steered away. So, despite that the Toronto scene is in many ways blossoming, I wonder how long it will last without a new crop of kids to replace the older generations.

Jonah: The good thing is that, in June, that smoking is going to be abolished in all bars, hence making all the bars potentially all-ages for shows.

MRR: So what do you guys have planned for the future, in terms of records and/or tours?

Jonah: We have a new 7" coming out that we haven't recorded yet. Eventually we'll do another LP and a tour of the west coast and Europe again. We also have a rash of interviews that will be turning up in almost a dozen zines, so find them all to get our story straight.

Martin: The new 7" will be a split release between two labels: Slasher records from Toronto, run by our friend and roadie Matt Bickle, and Even Worse records from Amsterdam, run by our friend Noel DeBoer. As Jonah said, we've got plenty more touring planned. In fact, we're going out to play a bunch of shows with Forward and then in September we're going out on the road together with Fucked Up. There are even rumors of going to Japan and back to Europe next summer!

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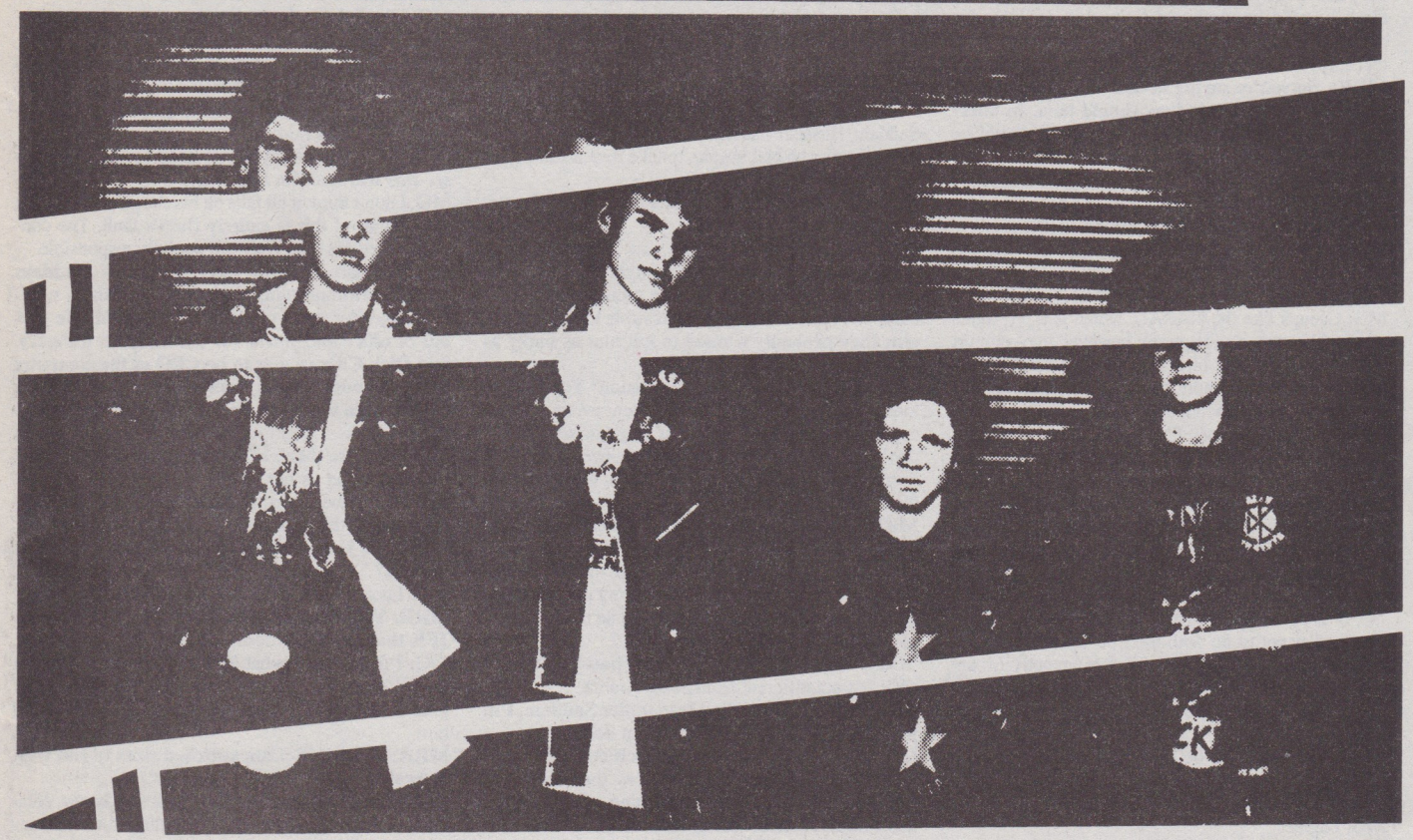
MICHALE GRAVES

This interview was done with Michale Graves the night before his band was going on tour. A very large bass player sat right near me, I'm not sure if he was just bored or ready to kill me if I asked the wrong questions for this commie mag, but Michael was pretty nice considering douchebags like Dave Smalley (Down By Law) refused to even be interviewed on the subject of voting for George Bush. Interview by Bill Florio.

MRR: Ok, let's fill everyone in on your punk rock career. Actually, before that, where did you grow up?
MG: I grew up in Bergen County, New Jersey. When I was 19, I joined the Misfits.
MRR: Did you go to school for anything, or did you plan to, before that?
MG: I graduated high school and I was studying to be an EMT.
MRR: Maybe Jerry was thinking you could revive him when he has heart attacks on tour.
MG: Sure, when Jerry has a stroke maybe I could help him. [*laughs*]
MRR: So, why do you think the Misfits chose you over someone older or with more experience?
MG: Because I stood out, not only my voice but my work ethic.
MRR: You're from New Jersey.
MG: I'm from New Jersey, I sang the songs really well, and, above all, I convinced Doyle that I could do it. Doyle was the hardest sell.
MRR: So, yer 19 and you just joined a band that just reformed after not playing for 10 years.
MG: Yeah, I appeared on stage with the Misfits during a Type-O Negative set at The Chance in Poughkeepsie, our first official show.
MRR: So what's the story behind the Onlys' razor blade business?
MG: They own a machine shop called Pro-Edge, it's in Vernon NJ. Basically, they are Xacto's main competitor.
MRR: So, do you think that Jerry won the Misfits name from Danzig because they could outspend him on the legal expenses?
MG: I never really thought of it that way. I couldn't say for sure.
MRR: I mean, those sorts of trials are like a poker game where everyone is bluffing.
MG: It always seemed like Glen just wanted to end it.
MRR: Well, most people don't know that Jerry and Doyle don't need to be in the Misfits at all financially, they're already independently wealthy because of their successful razor blade company.
MG: You're right. Jerry doesn't, but you have to understand, Doyle…
MRR: ...just works for Jerry?
MG: Yeah, Doyle is not in any sort of financial position like Jerry is at all. Doyle lives paycheck by paycheck.
MRR: Which is probably why he's not in the Misfits anymore either.
MG: Yeah, Doyle's not in for the same reasons that I'm not in the Misfits.
MRR: So how and when did that happen, that you're not in the Misfits anymore?
MG: In 2000, it suddenly didn't feel like I was in the band anymore, it was Jerry's way or the highway. It started when I was left at the border in Canada, at the beginning of the tour. Doyle and I flew to Montana, to meet those guys, to cross the border into Canada and start the tour. I was retained at the border because I had been convicted of a misdemeanor, I had gotten arrested in Washington DC in '97, and you have to declare that at the border. You need a minister's permit; I had gotten one all the other times we went up to Canada, but this time, for some strange reason, suddenly the permits weren't there for Michael to get out of the country.
MRR: Do I sense you implying this was on purpose?
MG: Of course, how do you expect to get the singer in when you needed the permits all the other times? So, they went without me and Zoli from Ignite sang. I met back up with them in Vermont, and everything wrong with the band internally came excruciatingly to a head. It was me, Doyle, and Chud, and I was riding on the crew bus, hanging out with the crew more than I was hanging out with the band. We didn't talk to Jerry or Kenny, the manager, and we were told that any of us could be fired at any moment, you may be singing for this band but you're not *the singer* of the band. Hey, if they wanna do what they wanna do without me, Jerry wants to do what he wants, and he doesn't want anybody else's input...
MRR: Sounds like what all elderly punk rockers do.
MG: I guess I'm learning this.
MRR: Then you just started a new band right?
MG: Yeah The Graves.
MRR: How did that go?
MG: It was a success. We toured two summers, released an EP. It was difficult because it was a very tumultuous time in everybody's life, including mine. A lot of the things that weren't dealt with in the Misfits, on my and Chud's parts, bled over into the new project, which ultimately poisoned it.
MRR: I heard that the rest of the band found out that you had quit from reading it on the band's website.
MG: That's not true. We had a Japanese tour planned. I told those guys when we got home from tour, and by the way I didn't tell them as nicely as this (*laughs*), "When we get home, that's it. I don't care if you guys drop off the face of the planet." Everyone knew how much I didn't wanna be involved.
MRR: Ok, so how did you get a column on conservativepunk.com?
MG: Andrew Wilcox, he's a talk show host on WABC 770AM. He's the youngest voice in conservative radio.
MRR: Does he have a Bouncing Souls tattoo as well?
MG: No, that's probably Nick Rizzuto, the guy who does the site; Andrew Wilcox probably doesn't have one.

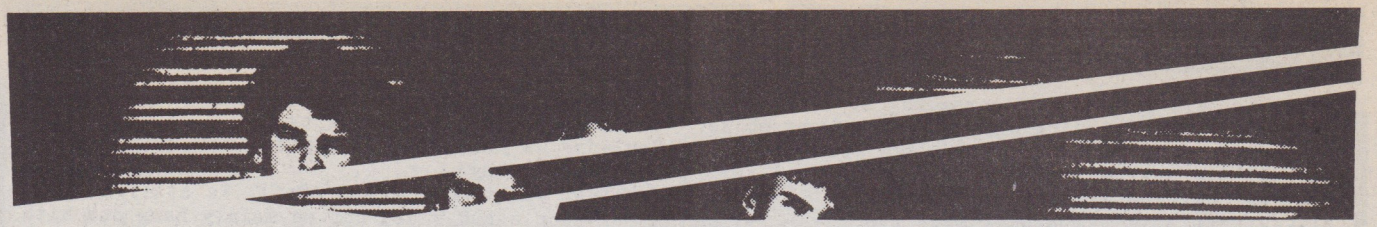
MRR: Do you have any comment on Bouncing Souls tattoos?
MG: I, um, I dunno.
MRR: Do you plan on getting a Bouncing Souls tattoo?
MG: Not at all. (*Bill laughs a lot here*) I heard Andrew playing some Misfits tunes on his radio show, so I called him up and we kinda just hit off a friendship. Nick contacted Andrew to inform him about this website (www.conservativepunk.com) he was gonna start. Andrew put me in touch with Nick and Nick asked me if I wanted to be involved. At the time, I knew nothing about Punkvoter...
MRR: ...which is Fat Mike's thing?
MG: I researched it and decided what I came across on Punkvoter…
MRR: So, are you saying you're just reacting to what you see there more than…
MG: It's not completely reactionary to what I see in the punk scene, I hold these views anyway, but I don't think I would be motivated to be this involved this openly and passionately if punkvoter wasn't in existence, if Fat Mike wasn't doing what he is doing.
MRR: So you're saying because kids don't know what the hell to think, they should have an alternative point of view to read about, there should be something else?
MG: Precisely.
MRR: So, yer not being a Lee Ving here and just trying to piss people off and offend them?
MG: Not at all, not at all. There are some very serious issues that Fat Mike is raising money for.
MRR: Like what? Let's expose this.
MG: Groups like the NARAL, which is a pro-rights group. It's a pro-choice group; however, they support legislation for partial-birth abortion. A lot of kids are like, "Yeah lets support the NARAL, because it's Punkvoter and we should be pro-choice, let's give our money to this group." They don't understand that these people are taking their money to lobby to make partial-birth abortion legal.
MRR: Are you pro-life? Or pro-choice? I think it's funny that you bring up partial-birth abortion when it's an issue that's been invented to confuse people on the issue. Are you confused?
MG: I don't think the government has the right to tell me, or especially a woman who is pregnant, what to do or what not to do with their bodies. The government shouldn't have that power over anybody. So am I pro-choice, absolutely. Am I for or against abortion? I think the outcome of a pregnancy is a child, not an abortion.
MRR: I think we'd be better off with money and efforts going to education instead of legislation that just confuses the issue.
MG: I agree.
MRR: And education isn't going to church, you need to make sure 16 or 17 year-olds know, hey, if you get pregnant, if have to do something about it right away, if you don't have society instilling fear and guilt in you for making a mistake, you won't have very many kids hiding their pregnancy for seven months. But don't you see? Their goal is to ban abortion this much, this way once you have given in to making it illegal *this much*, it makes it that much easier to make it illegal this much *more* a few years down the road.
MG: You're absolutely right.
MRR: It's difficult to find a doctor to even do an abortion in many places because there are so many pro-life people terrorizing them. Do we really need to encourage those types in any way?
MG: See, my problem with Fat Mike is that he would never sit in a room with me have this type of back and forth. We had set up an interview on WLIB and NPR and we had the chance to do it on the Howard Stern show and each time, he just said, "Well, why do I have to debate you? Why should I talk to you?"
MRR: On that note, Dave Smalley refused an interview by *MRR*.
MG: Oh, why? *Really*? Why won't these guys talk, man?
MRR: Maybe they're afraid people will figure out how stupid they are. So let's get off the abortion issue here. I think that a lot of these issues are really non-issues. Abortion, social security, gay marriage: they're all things that, in all actuality, are would-be suicide for Congress to actually try to mess with.
MG: Indeed.
MRR: They're just there to keep us from talking about things that actually matter, like a high rate of unemployment and a war that we can't afford to pay for. Those are the real issues. So when we get to the real issues, you say we should vote for Bush. That's what we have to get to here. Why should we vote for Bush?
MG: Because of the core values that he has, his willingness to lead regardless of what the political fallout may be.
MRR: He definitely has that. So what do you think about the war?
MG: I support the war.
MRR: Do you think unilateral action was a good idea?
MG: We went to the UN; we put it before the whole world. This has been going on for years and years. Saddam Hussein had twelve years to turn over the weapons that he had. Again, to take responsibility for his actions.
MRR: Well, what about Pakistan, North Korea, and Israel?
MG: We're dealing with those now. All these people that hate America and want to fight us, they're all going to Iraq. Iraq seems like the ground zero.
MRR: Well, Saddam had no trouble keeping them out; they probably wanted to kill him as badly as we did.
MG: But, what's the price of inaction? You have to look back to World War II, when everyone was appeasing Hitler. No one wants to go to war, man, I don't support war. My cousins are over there. My friends are over there in the line of fire. We don't want them to be there.
MRR: Well, in World War II, Hitler was taking over other countries.
MG: And Saddam was gassing and murdering and torturing his people. And he was taking the money he got from oil and building palaces, while the Iraqi people starved.
MRR: How is that different from Saudi Arabia?
MG: It's not different from Saudi Arabia.
MRR: I'm not defending Iraq under Saddam, I'm just asking if Bush made the right decision.
MG: I think Bush made the best decision based on the information and the circumstances that were surrounding us. After 9/11 everything changed. You don't think Hussein was giving money to the North Koreans and all these other fucking jokesters? Making these weapons and shit?
MRR: No I don't.
MG: You gotta start somewhere.
MRR: So why aren't we attacking Saudi Arabia?
MG: If there's still human life on this planet by then, eventually we're gonna have to get to that problem.
MRR: But at what cost to our own country? We're already going to be paying for this way past the time of our deaths.
MG: I would rather worry about that than not have a country at all.
MRR: Ok.
MG: The price of inaction is so much more than what we are dealing with now in my eyes.
MRR: What about Vietnam?
MG: Completely different.
MRR: Well if Bush has no WMDs, his only reason for attacking Iraq is to hopefully spread democracy throughout the Middle East. Doesn't that seem like a Vietnam-type objective?
MG: Our country was built on a place where people could come and they could be given their God-given right to live free.
MRR: Unless you were black or American Indian. Ok, George Bush, answer the question: How is this different from Vietnam?
MG: Because radical Islamic militants flew planes into our buildings! And said "We are at war with you and we will kill you anywhere at anytime."
MRR: None of them were from Iraq. The fairy-tale idea of having a unified democracy in Iraq, how far is that from the one we wished on Vietnam?
MG: Well, look at Vietnam now: is it a better place than it was in the 60s?
MRR: No, we failed!
MG: Why did we fail?
MRR: It's hard to fight an enemy that isn't clearly defined. The American Revolution, why did Britain lose? They didn't have a real army to fight. They'd march down the street and some American hillbilly would shoot the general. Why can't we learn from the mistakes of the past?
MG: So you would define Vietnam as a defeat.
MRR: Yes.
MG: I think the political climate and the climate within the country, right or wrong…
MRR: Well, there were so many more people dying. Don't you think that this war could escalate to that point and still not accomplish anything?
MG: Yeah, yeah I do.
MRR: But you're saying we need to keep Bush to see this war end the right way?
MG: I don't think it all falls on his shoulders; we can't say that all of this is entirely Bush's fault. The congress voted for this. We're all partially responsible.
MRR: Bush I could have easily set Saddam straight without going to war the first time, without angering most of the Islamic world. He gets out of office and works for the weapons industry, and Dick Chaney gets to be CEO of the company with the most to gain from going to war. You're saying since these are the same people that put us in this fucked position we need to keep them in office because they're they only ones who may feel inclined to get us out of it?
MG: The values, what that man is built on, and how he's leading this country is what I'm voting for…
MRR: Do you think Kerry would put in Socialist policies?
MG: I don't know what Kerry would do. But yeah.
MRR: You think he'd be more Jimmy Carter or JFK than say a Clinton?
MG: I don't know what Kerry would be, because it doesn't seem like you can get a straight answer out of him. If there was a better candidate I would vote for him.
MRR: What if McCain switched sides to run with Kerry?
MG: I would still have to support Bush/Cheney. John Kerry is not anyone I would be comfortable with running the country.
MRR: It sounds like you dislike Kerry more than you like Bush. It doesn't seem like you're really a Republican, you're just like, "Oh, Al Gore, he sucks."
MG: I don't think Gore or Kerry have the ability to lead like JFK or Bush or Reagan.
MRR: How come in the photo with the *New York Times* article, you were wearing skull makeup and you're not in the Misfits anymore?
MG: Because that's what I do, that's my professional persona.
MRR: Would you say your new band is gonna be the next Undead, Parasites, or Fiendz? Which one?
MG: I don't understand what that means. We're a million times better than the Undead. Those other bands, I dunno.
MRR: Do you feel you're qualified to write about politics?
MG: I think I'm qualified to write about things I feel are important to me. Again, I'm not a history teacher, I don't think that I…
MRR: Yer just a schmuck like everyone else.
MG: I'm just a schmuck like everyone else.

THE DIFFS



Together only one and half years, the Diffs hail from the Culver City-Venice area of West L.A. and have been playing with a constant line-up since February. Their sound is firmly rooted in classic (pre-Epitaph-Gilman) late 70s-early 80s West Coast/L.A./South Bay hardcore. No cookie cutter pop-punk for these guys. Earlier this year they crushed it opening for the re-vamped Weirdos and I recently saw them ripping apart another old folks backyard bbq jam session when they heisted the available musical instruments from the geezers present, which included myself and some of their parents (none of the band had driver's licenses yet). The Diffs blew out the night with a loose set of covers by TSOL, Fear, Black Flag, The Germs, and the DK's just for fun. But this is no kiddie cover band. The four live at home and are dedicated to practising and writing their own material (about ten or 12 originals). There's a 300-pressing four-song EP out on Headline Records and a full length album on the way. They also seized $250.00 in a crazed battle of the bands at Venice High School in early June when they easily trounced the mostly deathcore metal wannabes by snagging the biggest audience response. Something indefinable happened as soon as they hit the stage, before they'd even played a note, and when they did, the energy in the room tripled. How do you analyse that? Old school revivalists or traditionalists with roots in the past trying to go one further? MRR talked to the four members one afternoon recently. The following is excerpts of the conversation.

Interview by Brendan Mullen



Maxi Pad Drums / backing vocals age 12
Elvis Lead Guitar / backing vocals age 13
Richie Rhythm Guitar/ lead vocals age 16
Pauline Bass age 15

MRR: What was the first record you ever listened to? It doesn't even have to be punk.

Max: When I was really young, like three, I guess, I was into Green Day. My parents would take me to Lollapalooza and stuff like that when I was like three or four. That's like the first concert I went to. Probably the Green Day record was one of the first I ever bought.

MRR: Did you ever think that this would lead to getting into a band?

Max: I always wanted to be in a band when I was young, like a rock star dream.

MRR: To be like Green Day?

Max: Yeah, to be kind of like that, but it never really happened. Here I am now!

MRR: So who were your first heroes, like Billy Joe?

Max: I was into sports a lot when I was younger. I played basketball so I had a lot of sports heroes. Music heroes, yeah I guess Billy Joe and some people like that. When I was a little older like 8, I was into Blink-182.

MRR: Did you get over Blink in a hurry?

(Everyone laughs)

Max: Yeah! I really liked them for a long period of time but just recently…

MRR: Did you guys forgive him for that yet?

All: No!

Richie: My parents were really conservative so I wasn't exposed to punk rock like you guys. All I got back then was KISS-FM and Spice Girls. The first punk album I probably heard was the DK's *Fresh Fruit For Rotting Vegetables.*

Elvis: The first punk record I heard was Fear *The Record."* was like eight and driving with my dad and he started playing it in the car.

Max: Mine was probably TSOL The Black EP.

MRR: All West Coastin' old school stuff. The coolest. So how about you Pauline?

Pauline: I just kind of listened to what my sister and my parents listened to. I liked Guns 'n' Roses and I would like steal my sister's CDs like Rammstein and stuff. Just what I heard that was around. I wasn't particularly seeking it out, I would just find it and listen and see what I liked.

MRR: So what are your lyrics about?

Richie: The early lyrics were mainly about society or religion, like "Catholic Discipline." I wrote that because I have a really big problem with Catholicism after going to a Catholic school for a year. Writing music and lyrics became my way of venting because without it I'd probably vent in more destructive ways.

MRR: There was a band called that, an obscure art-punk band from the late 70s … that Kickboy from Slash magazine had …

Richie: That's where I got the name. Some songs are kind of like abstract and slightly poetic I suppose, but little by little we're writing more political stuff. At first I didn't want to write about politics because being such a young band, people don't take kids seriously. We finally just said screw it and decided to start writing about stuff that matters, stuff that was happening around us

Elvis: Some of our things are about current events. Like we have a song called "Super Celebrity" about Arnold Schwarzenegger.

Richie: Our main message is to just say, 'Wake up and start thinking!' because in America, everyone just walks around blind and doesn't think for themselves.

MRR: How many gigs have you played?

Elvis: Five or six … we opened up for the Weirdos and the Skulls at the El Rey …

Richie: Counting parties a little more. If you count big shows, probably five. We played
a bunch of little parties, like backyard stuff …

Max: We were supposed to play the Troubadour with Shattered Faith, but they were out of town and they didn't come back in time and the show got cancelled ..

MRR: Do you all write the songs together? Do you all throw in bits and pieces?

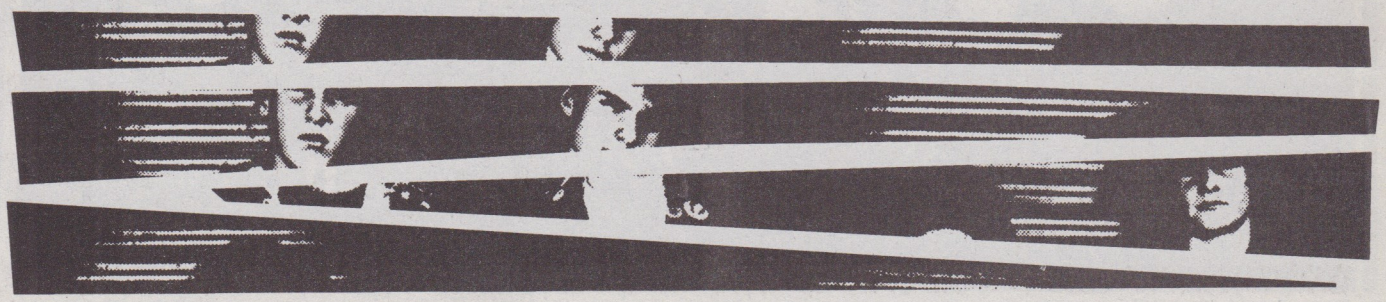
Richie: Usually, I write the main idea and bring it to Max, Elvis, and Pauline and show them it and Elvis adds the solo and Max drums to it. Basically I have the main idea most of the time and they add flavor.

Elvis: We've been doing it together a lot more lately.

Max: I've been writing some lyrics, not a lot, and we've been trying more stuff together rather than have Richie do it all, which it was for like a while.

MRR: So how did you all come together?

Richie: Max and I went to the same school and I heard that he played drums and
I saw him play in a couple of talent shows and I asked him if he wanted to join this band
I was thinking of putting together. Our original bassist was our neighbor and I taught him how to play. The original lead guitarist went to the Catholic school. St. Monica. We practiced for a couple of months. We lost our lead guitarist and Max said, 'Hey, my brother plays guitar.' That was pretty much the first real lineup that played shows. Once it started to pick up, our bassist wanted out. He wanted to be a businessman. There was probably two months of having no bassist, a chaotic period



where we were pretty much screaming at each other.
Elvis: I started playing bass at some of our shows.
Richie: Pauline goes to Venice High with me and I had met her earlier in the school year.
Pauline: We were hanging out at lunch.
Richie: She said she played bass and after trying out a bunch of worthless kids, we got her over and it's working out great ever since.
MRR: Do you all get shit at school for being into punk rock?
Richie: I do.
Pauline: I do. I think it's just because I'm not ghetto that I get picked on.
Richie: The gangsters. The hip hoppers give you shit all the time. The white preppie kids don't really like it either.
MRR: So you still get cat called in 2004? I thought it was so accepted by now.
Richie: It's definitely come a long way but it's still not completely accepted.
MRR: What do your teachers think?
Max: I have a cool history teacher that's all into Social Distortion and stuff.
Elvis : I have a science teacher that's into punk and everything. He's the only cool one at my school.
MRR: I know some teachers in the L.A. Unified School District and they say most of the brightest kids in the class nowadays are the punk rockers. Why is that they wonder?
Richie: Everybody else is an idiot and the punkers actually think.
MRR: So you're not like awkward loners all stuck in the corner?
Pauline: I choose to be the loner in the corner.
Richie: Me and Pauline we kind of have a close-knit circle of friends.
Pauline: We have two friends.
Richie: There are four of us and we kind of hang out in a secluded little hallway by ourselves and scream at people that walk by.
Pauline: We have other friends, too.
Richie: *You* may …
Pauline: Like Maggie and stuff. We still talk to other people and stuff but we mainly hang out with these two other kids.
MRR: So you don't really care if it goes into playing this music twenty years from now or ten years from now?
Pauline: We'd love it. This is fun.
Richie: We were like, 'Let's commit to doing something long-term.' Instead of being some mindless zombie behind a desk on the 48th floor of a business building.
Max: I'd rather be making a little bit of money enough to live by playing something that I really like rather than doing something to try and make a lot of money.
MRR: Do you think you'll try to go to college and do this?
Richie: Depending on where we go as a band. If we get successful and people like us and we sell enough records and tour, we'll probably hold off on college. When things slow down we might take some classes, but I'm hoping things will pick up and we won't have to. It's good that we started early. So many bands start later.
MRR: And then they mistake a hobby for a career and get all messed up and disillusioned and angry when it doesn't pan. Punk rock was originally supposed to be teen music by and for other teens.
Richie: It was.
Elvis: It seems like our biggest fans are old punkers.
Max: If you're going to be playing the same stuff over and over, it's bound to get pretty weird. I think a band should evolve into something. We've already evolved a lot from the first EP.

MIDNIGHT CREEPS

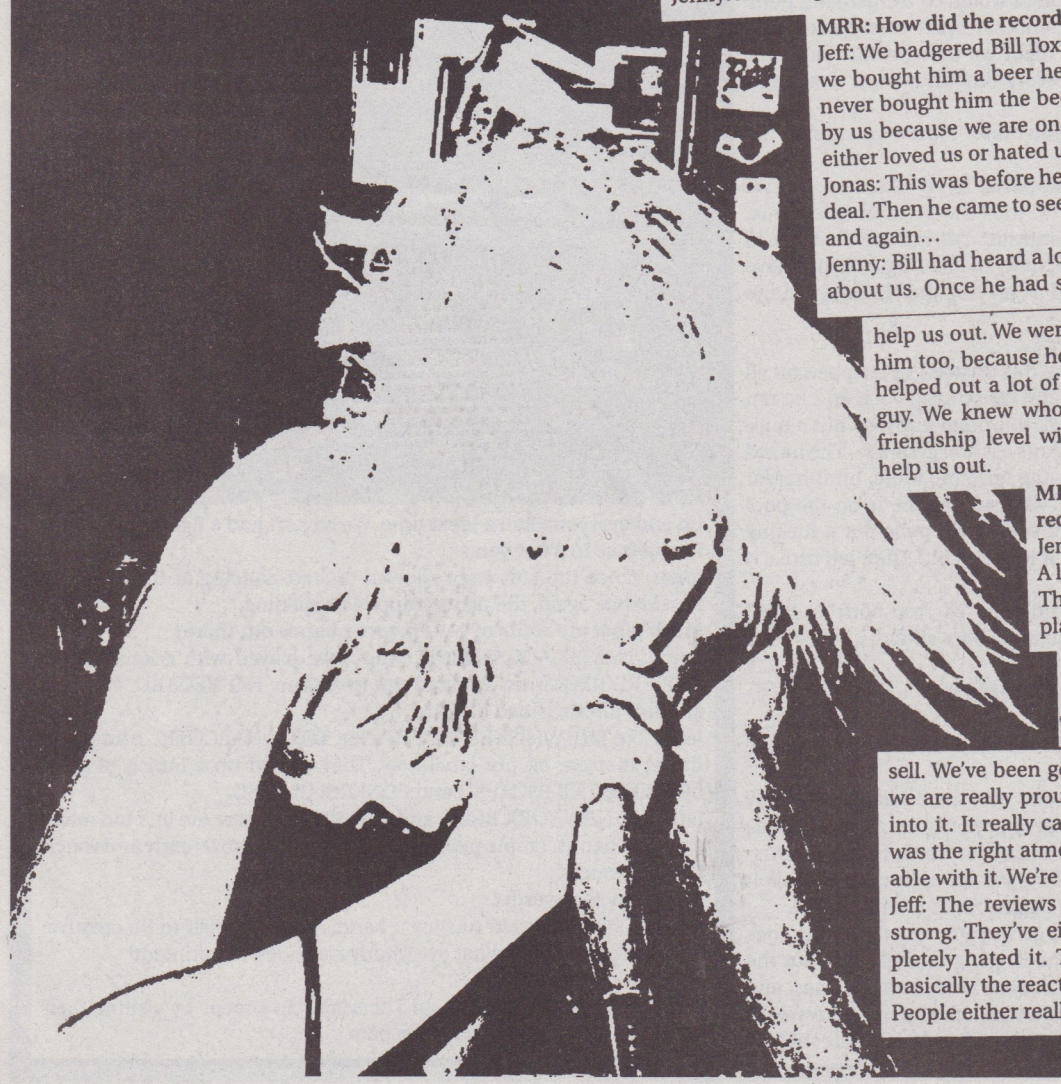
The Midnight Creeps can only be described as a force to be reckoned with. Combining the visuals of The Plasmatics with the sound of The Cramps, this band is doing something far different from most punk bands these days. They have built on all their influences to create something totally original. Since they work/tour tirelessly, I'd be surprised if you haven't heard of them. For those of you who live under a rock, I'd like to introduce to you The Midnight Creeps.

Interviewed by Renae Bryant
Transcribed by Jared Nothing

MRR: How did The Midnight Creeps get started?
Jonas: Well, I heard Jenny singing at my house one time and she thought she sounded really fucking good. I decided we had to start a band. She was down for it. Then we tried to get Heather (the original guitarist) to join, because we thought she was really cool. She kept blowing us off for a really long time, but then eventually she decided to join. Jeff and I had been in two bands together before this.

MRR: What were you looking for with The Midnight Creeps?
Jonas: Jenny and I were really looking for attitude more than anything else. Everyone had to be willing to be homeless, if necessary, to be in the band.

MRR: Why the name The Midnight Creeps?
Jenny: A Midnight Creep is somebody who fucks someone that is asleep.

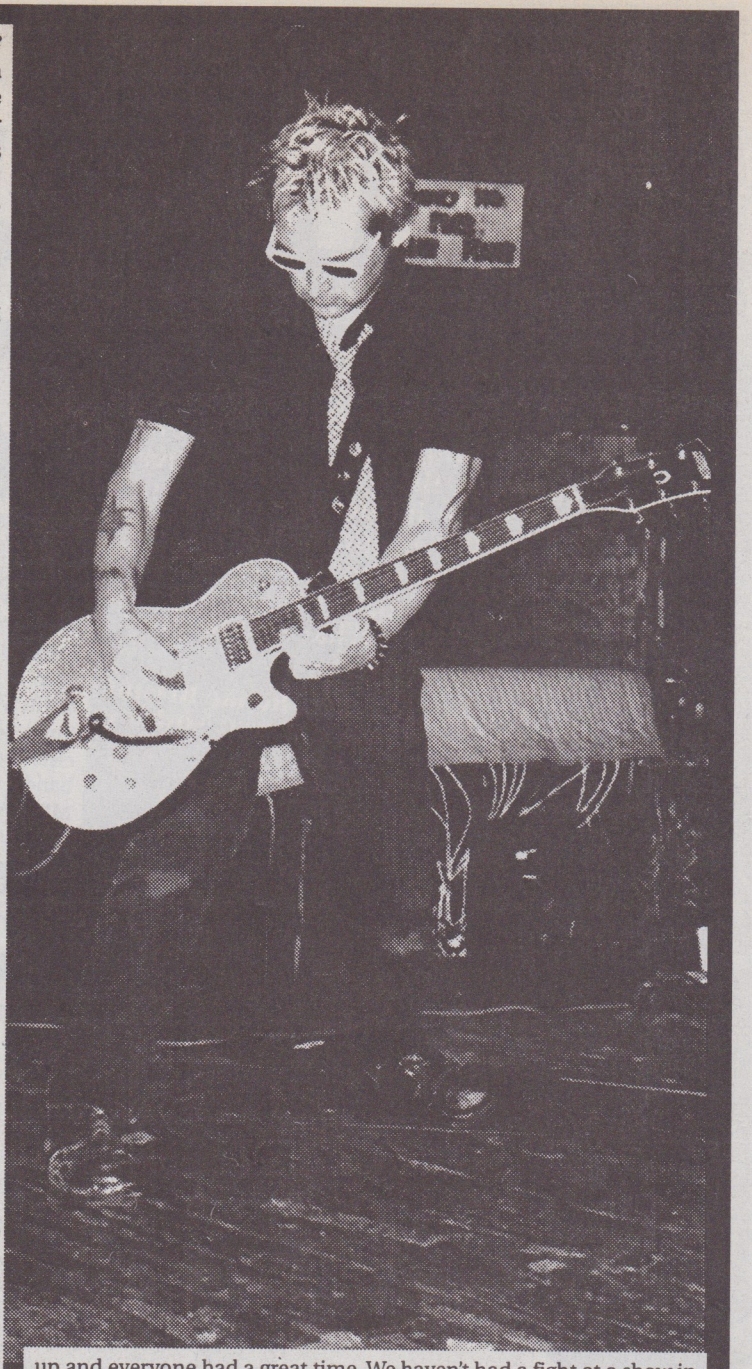


MRR: How did the record come about?
Jeff: We badgered Bill Toxic at a bar one night. He said if we bought him a beer he would put out our record. We never bought him the beer, but I think he was intrigued by us because we are one of those bands where people either loved us or hated us.
Jonas: This was before he had even seen us. That was the deal. Then he came to see us and kept coming back again and again...
Jenny: Bill had heard a lot of good things and bad things about us. Once he had seen us, he definitely wanted to help us out. We were very interested in working with him too, because he is well known in Boston. He has helped out a lot of people. He's just a real stand up guy. We knew who he was and we got to be on a friendship level with him before he was willing to help us out.

MRR: How is the record being received?
Jenny: It's being received really well. A lot of kids are really interested in it. The next time we go to the same place, all the kids know the words. That's kind of important. We're on our second pressing right now and hopefully it will continue to sell. We've been getting a really good response and we are really proud of it, too. We put a lot of work into it. It really came together well in the studio. It was the right atmosphere and we felt very comfortable with it. We're very proud of that record.
Jeff: The reviews for the record have been really strong. They've either completely loved it or completely hated it. There's no middle ground. That's basically the reaction to our whole musical careers. People either really love us or really hate us.

MRR: What was the strangest lineup that you guys have been on?
Jenny: Well, we played with an AC/DC cover band in Pennsylvania and about 20 people showed up. This band had the worst rock star attitude ever. I mean, you're not even playing your own material, and you come in having this attitude. It was absolutely ridiculous.
MRR: Jeff said you played with some emo bands like BOY SETS FIRE. That seems like a strange combination.
Jonas: I had actually never heard of any of those bands before. I didn't expect to like them, but they were actually some pretty cool bands. I've never heard their records, but they were entertaining live bands.
Jeff: Yeah, it was pretty cool to play with bands like THE HOPE CONSIPIRACY and Boy Sets Fire. They put us on their bill after our show had been cancelled. They were really nice people. It wasn't my cup of tea musically, but then we hung out with them and they were awesome. We stole all of their beer from their tour bus.
Jenny: There was one time when we played this outdoor festival in New Haven and we played with a very eclectic mix of bands. There was an African gospel band. They played right before us and we were really nervous because there was a bunch of families there. So we decided to try to be as offensive as possible because there is no other way to go! We played "I'm A Cunt." It was great. There was this father and son (probably eight years old) and I thought they were going to get up and leave because they were so offended. Instead he took out a video camera and started filming us. That was definitely strange.
Jeff: The first time we played out on the West Coast, TOXIC NARCOTIC had invited us out to open up for them. It was a little nerve wracking. The line-ups for the shows would be a crust-core punk band, a crust-core punk band, another crust-core punk band, then us, and then Toxic. Every night we thought this audience would completely hate us, but every time they went absolutely crazy for us.
MRR: What kind of tours have you done? I know you are on the road a lot.
Jeff: The first one we did was supposed to be 47 shows, but we only ended up doing 33. Then we took the 36-hour ride home. Our last tour was absolutely fantastic. We managed to do 45 shows in 47 days. [Since this interview, The Midnight Creeps have done two more US tours as well as playing the "Holidays in the Sun" Festival in England twice.]
MRR: What's your best tour story?
Jonas: We played this party where this wasted guy stripped off all his clothes except for his boots and his bondage belt and he ran around the house. Soon after that, this other guy took out a bullwhip and started whipping this guy's ass and genitalia. The naked guy fucking loved it. He kept saying "give me more, hit it harder this time, and don't miss it." All of a sudden, he is on the pool table with his ass in the air and somebody pulls out a fucking machete and he screamed, "put it in, put it in." Then Jeff broke it up.
Jeff: Yeah, I fucking grabbed it and said, "No, you don't do that." Then they get the brilliant idea to use a pool stick.
Jonas: Oh God, it was awful.
MRR: You didn't miss the penetration then?
Jonas: I had to watch.
MRR: You guys worked hard to develop the scene in Rhode Island. Tell us about the scene.
Jenny: It started off really small and now there are a lot of really good local bands. A lot of kids were popping up all over Rhode Island and it's now a really tight knit scene. There is a lot of artistic energy and everyone is watching out for each other. I think it has a lot to do with Jeff bringing bigger bands to Providence.
Jeff: There's no attitude. You can go to your very first punk rock show at whatever age and no one is going to shove you out the door. You can ask about any band, even really popular ones, and no one will give you shit for not knowing about them. A few weeks ago, we did a show with a wide variety of bands. 500 kids showed up and everyone had a great time. We haven't had a fight at a show in Providence in a few years.
Jonas: Once the kids were allowed to start dancing at the shows in Providence again, the fights stopped happening.
MRR: What are some of your favorite bands out there?
Jenny: NAKED AGGRESSION, whom we played with a lot recently. CAPE REGIME from England are awesome. NO REGARD, who are another Rhode Island band.
Jeff: I like THE WHISKEY REBELS a lot, TOXIC NARCOTIC, a lot of the bands that are on our label now. They picked up a bunch of great bands like THE ESCAPED and PISSFIRE UNITED.
Jeff: THE NEW YORK REL-X and THE KRAYS. There are just too many amazing bands. I think people should go to the shows early and watch the new bands.
MRR: Any last words?
Jenny: Don't be afraid to start a band. Allow yourself to be creative. You don't have to do what everybody else does. Experiment!

You can find out the latest on The Midnight Creeps by visiting their website at www.midnightcreeps.com



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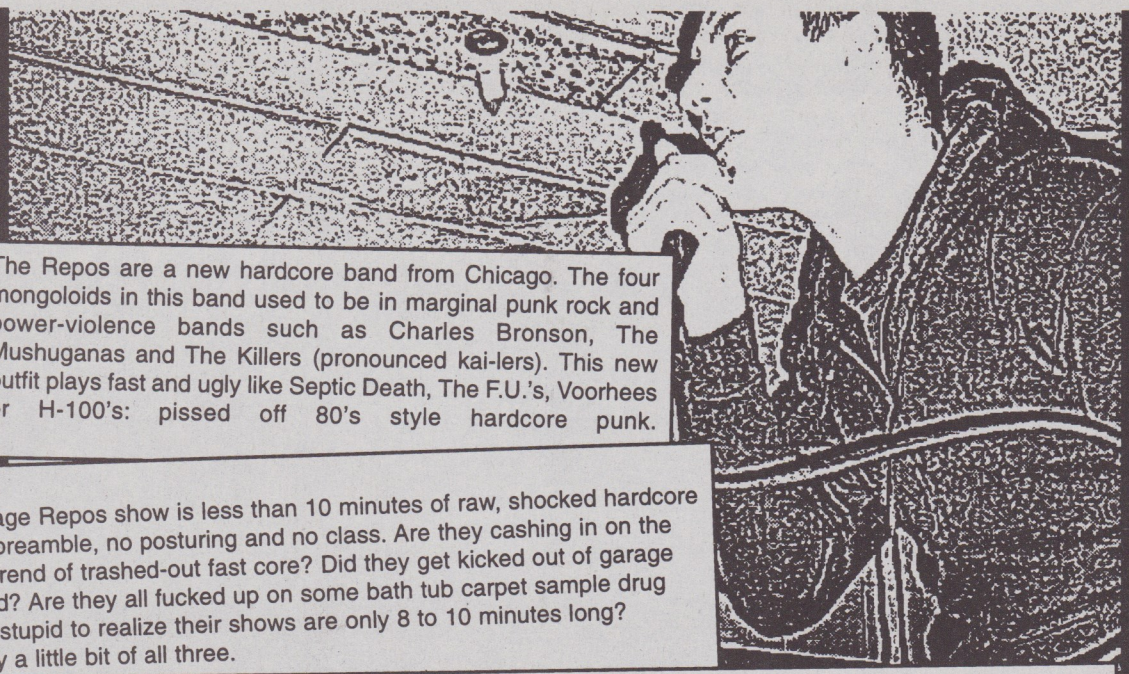


The Repos are a new hardcore band from Chicago. The four mongoloids in this band used to be in marginal punk rock and power-violence bands such as Charles Bronson, The Mushuganas and The Killers (pronounced kai-lers). This new outfit plays fast and ugly like Septic Death, The F.U.'s, Voorhees or H-100's: pissed off 80's style hardcore punk.

An average Repos show is less than 10 minutes of raw, shocked hardcore with no preamble, no posturing and no class. Are they cashing in on the current trend of trashed-out fast core? Did they get kicked out of garage rock land? Are they all fucked up on some bath tub carpet sample drug and too stupid to realize their shows are only 8 to 10 minutes long? Probably a little bit of all three.

With these daunting questions plaguing me I set out to get some answers from Aaron and Joe. Interviewing these fucking brain surgeons was a chore. I was amazed at just how little these fucking champs of culture and society knew. Whatever van seat in front of whoever's trailer these dudes are currently squatting on, I'm sure they'll get a hoot out of how this turned out. Interview by Mickey

MRR: So The Repos is ex-members of The Mushuganas and Charles Bronson? Who did what in these bands and who does what in The Repos?
AARON: Craig was the singer and guitarist for the Mushuganas and is The Repos drummer. Joe played guitar in the Mushuganas and plays guitar in this band. Adam, who plays bass in the Repos, played guitar in the Killers. I played the bass in Mushuganas, guitar in Charles Bronson and I am the singer in the Repos.
JOE: Beep beep boop.

MRR: For whoever was in the Mushuganas what possessed you to go from playing punk rock'n'roll to fast dirty hardcore?
AARON: I don't know. I think we just flipped a coin. We were one turn of the coin away from playing King Crimson covers.
JOE: Whatever, he's lying. It's all about street cred. Right now, I've got so much street cred coming out of my fucking ass it's sick. I used street cred as a down payment on my house.

MRR: So would this have been an entire tribute band or just some covers? If it was a whole band would it be called Poseidon?
JOE: 21 CENTURY SCHIZOID MEN. Fantasy Thrash, bro.
AARON: It was planned to be like a Civil War re-enactment, but we couldn't find the right hats. I think the working title was IN THE COURT OF THE CRIMSON COVER BAND.

MRR: You've played locally a fair amount since you got together last summer, but even your first show was memorable, having been out in the middle of nowhere in a garage that had a soiled mattress and many combustibles in it. Were you surprised it went as well as it did?
JOE: A bag of dog food was the opening band. A pile of oily rags were the headliners. Out street cred that!
AARON: Yeah, I was completely surprised. Actually, I don't really think people liked us, they were just smiling because the fumes from the combustibles were getting to them.

MRR: If you could punch one celebrity in the throat, who would it be?
AARON: The List is too long. I would definitely like to punch the wig off Ted Danson's head.
JOE: Billy Crystal. Definitely Billy Crystal. Yeah, I'll hit an old man. I don't care. This is how I roll.

MRR: Do you have any scheme with lyrics? Is this a band with a theme or a political agenda?
AARON: Good question. I'll leave the political lyrics to those who feel they have something intelligent to say. I am a working-class white trash idiot with barely more than a high school education. I think, as far as a theme goes, I like to write about the dark side of human behavior. Death, drugs, revenge, and mental illness are all topics I've touched on. I also like to write songs about unity and friendship.
JOE: And wizards.

MRR: How far do you want to take this whole Repos thing?
JOE: Our final album will be more in the inspirational rock vein. Weight lifting music. Think Karate Kid theme, Hagar-era Van Halen and

early Survivor.
AARON: I'd like to take it all the way to the bad-metal phase with all the tattoos and drug problems and knife fights included.

MRR: Is the short live set an intentional thing? Are you playing every song you can play when you play live?
JOE: Don't you get bored watching bands play their entire discography? What the fuck? What are they trying to prove? You can remember how to play 30 songs. Great! Fascinating!
AARON: We try to play a show like it's a fistfight. We don't play every song we know, just the ones we feel like playing.

MRR: How much money could one offer The Repos to stop playing? $10? $20?
AARON: One time we got paid $17 dollars and we stopped. Usually, we don't get paid.
JOE: I'd take twelve shares of street cred.

MRR: Do you have a preference for the kinds of shows you play? So far I've seen all ages shows. Will you play 21+ shows?
AARON: We haven't really played too many of one kind of show to have much of a preference. So far we've played a garage, a loft, a hall, a basement, and a bowling alley. We will play 21+ shows, why not?
JOE: We've played 21+ shows, but no one really comes. It's not very fun, but it helps expand our audience to the much-coveted "Hang-out-in-the-bar-and-not-watch-the-band" crowd.

MRR: If you could set one politician on fire with immunity, who would it be?
AARON: As many as possible.
JOE: That's kind of extreme, dude. I'll say this though, if my Alderman keeps pushing this Wal-Mart thing, I might put a derogatory sign in my front yard.

MRR: Will you vote for president this November, if so, for whom?
AARON: I'm a registered voter and will vote against the current administration. I don't think the way I vote has anything to do with my band. I have never had a discussion about voting with the rest of the band. I don't care. I hate other people's opinions. Politics shouldn't get in the way of friendships.
JOE: Daley, all the way.

MRR: What modern punk or hardcore bands do you monkeys listen to? What bands would you go out of your way to see play live?
JOE: All of them. Seriously, they're all GREAT!!!
AARON: I find that I am interested in bands for reasons that I can't easily explain. I like the people who play fucked-up music and fucked-up people who play music. It's a combination of the music and the people involved. I like bands that have something to say, but not necessarily on any specific topics. I guess I like to see things from a different vantage point. These bands do it the way I like it: Punch In The Face, This Is My Fist, Das Oath, Fourth Rotor, Pedestrians, Fourteen Or Fight, Annihilation Time, Career Suicide, Fucked Up, Outlaw Order.

MRR: Hardcore seems to be closer now to the mainstream than ever before. With the metal-hardcore cross over stuff getting so big do you ever see a band as fast, ugly and retarded as The Repos ever gaining any sort of popular interest? What would you do with this popularity if it ever landed in your lap?
JOE: I highly doubt that the music we play would ever be considered mainstream or even mildly commercial. If by some strange chance it did, I'm sure we'd fuck up any chance of turning a profit. I have a job, a mortgage and I'm a little long in the tooth to be having rock-n-roll fantasies about being a jukebox hero. If I ever made money from music though, I'd probably do something lame like pay off my debts.
AARON: I could imagine, yeah, but it would never ever happen. If 8-minute sets were the norm I would go see a lot more shows, but it isn't a sellable quality. Imagine 10,000 fifteen year olds at some monster truck show alongside another 10,000 angry, spitting, beer-swilling, low-society types and The Repos playing a violent, full-speed set with a Budweiser banner flying behind us. I don't think that we are marketable in the way that the metal hardcore bands are and will never be. We are a band of mutants. There is nothing that make-up, hairstyles, or fashionable clothing could do to make us pretty. In the case that the end of time rears it's oozing head, we will be the soundtrack to the apocalypse. If The Repos did gain popularity, it would only be a short time before we all would have gold teeth.

MRR: How many martial arts do you know? Are you better with Num-Chucks or Shuriken stars?
JOE: I'm a brown belt in Kenpo Karate. I don't fuck around with that weapons shit, though. Only firearms.
AARON: I know how to make photocopies. Do you consider that art?

MRR: What's better to blow into opponents' eyes: salt, flour or unclassified green mist?
JOE: The mist looks cool, and is very effective, but sucks to hold in your mouth for the duration of the match. Salt is really more of a ritual thing, tossed at the beginning of a bout. I'm going to have to go with flour. Really though, I'd much rather go into it with a loaded boot or a roll of quarters.
AARON: Why are you wasting my time? A chicken bone in the neck is worth salted flour blown into a perfect horse's ass.

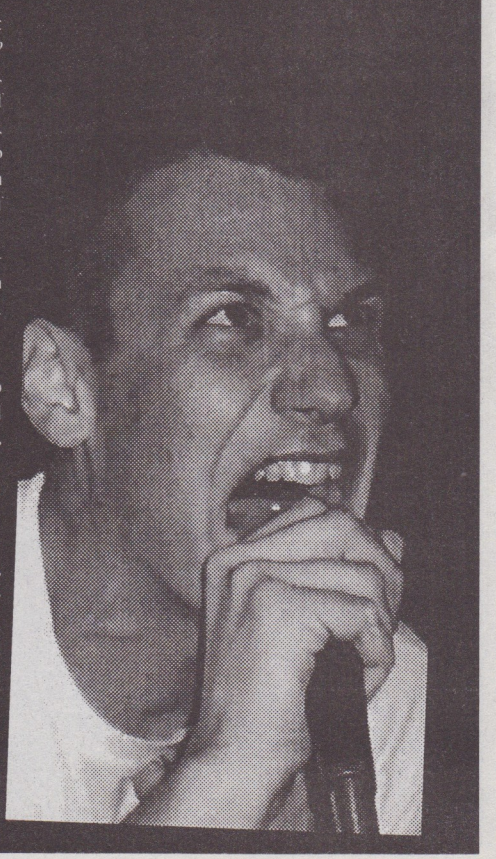
MRR: Are you planning to tour?
\AARON: No, not planning. I would really like to go on tour, but we're all pretty busy. I think we'll just keep it to doing out-of-town weekend stints whenever the offers come up.
JOE: I don't think I could handle any more street cred.

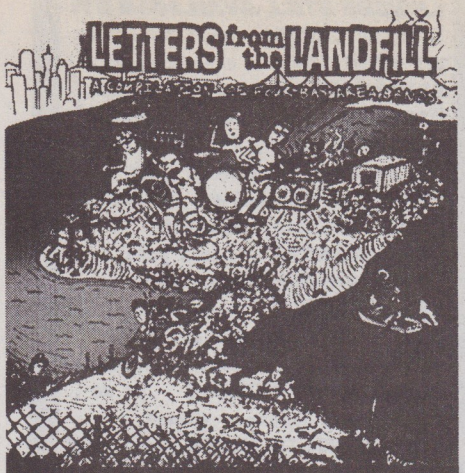
MRR: When the nuclear war comes what species do you think will rise to dominance, the rats or the roaches?
JOE: Roaches, most likely. I'm not too worried though because I have a bomb shelter and a shit load of flamethrowers.

MRR: Will you join a clan of post-human mongoloid mutants or will you go renegade? If you guys go renegade what vehicle will you commandeer to take to the deserted roads of the badlands seeking vengeance for the murder of your wives and kids?
JOEL: I'll just put chains on the tires of my '87 Dodge Charger and get busy. It probably won't be that much different from winter in Chicago.
AARON: I think a rusty Oldsmobile Cutlass Supreme made in the late 70's would make for a fine vehicle. Of course we'd have to share it with the roaches, but I would eventually find a way to crash it into a wall made from chicken bones. Upon impact, I would curl into the fetal position and abort.

MRR: So what happened to the record on Youth Attack? I hear you are releasing the 12" that was supposed to be coming out yourselves, so how can people get the record?
JOE: I have no idea.
AARON: He (Youth Attack) didn't have the money. It's cool though because the record is out. If someone can write a paragraph about the neighborhood they live in and send $10 cash, they can have it. Please don't just send a piece of paper that says "Send 1 record." That fucking sucks. The address is: REPOS P.O. BOX 139 LYONS, IL 60534.

MRR: What other records are coming out?
AARON: We have a split 7" coming out with our Chicago cohorts Fourteen Or Fight. It'll be done just in time for you to move on to some other trend.





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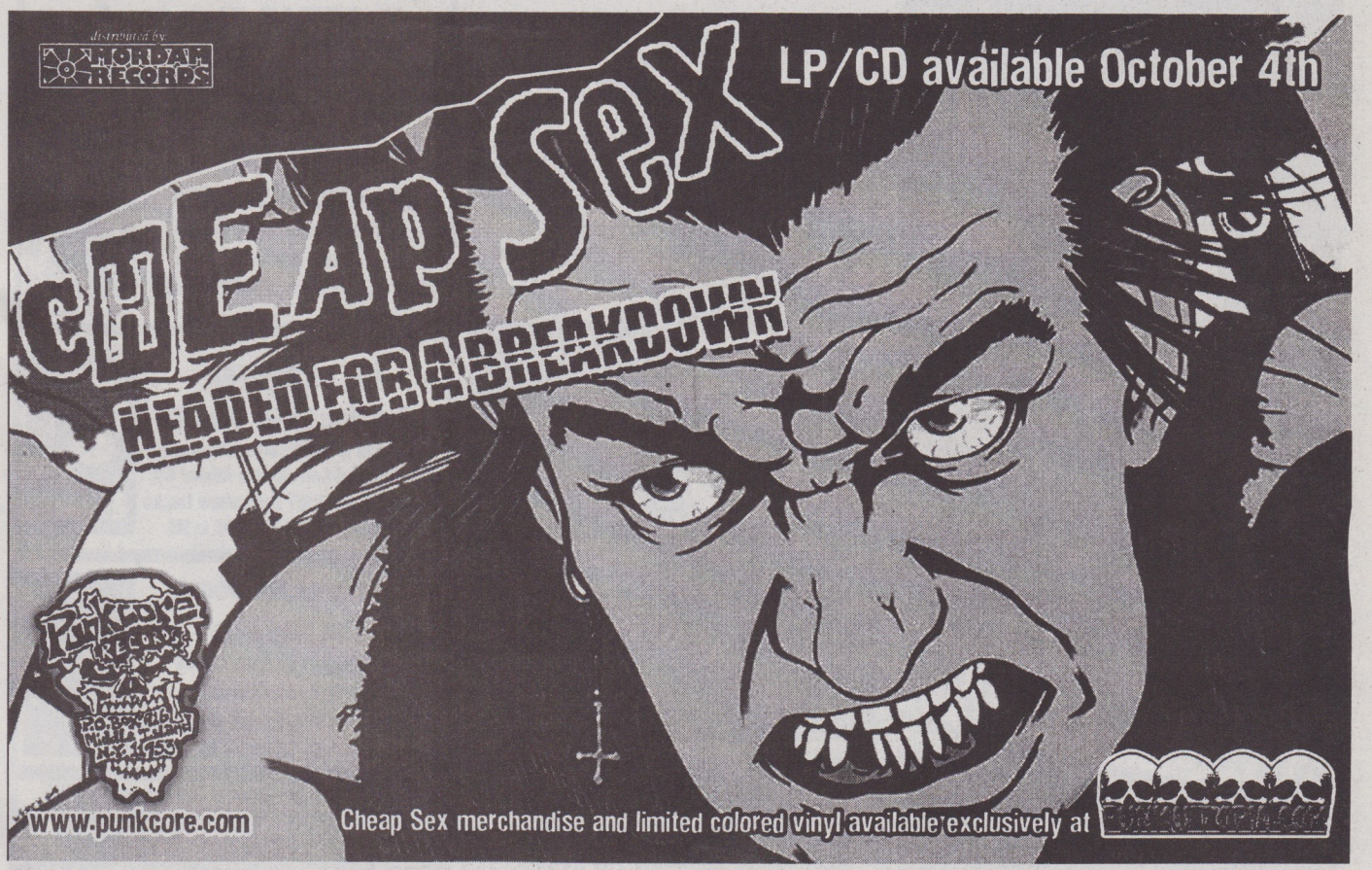

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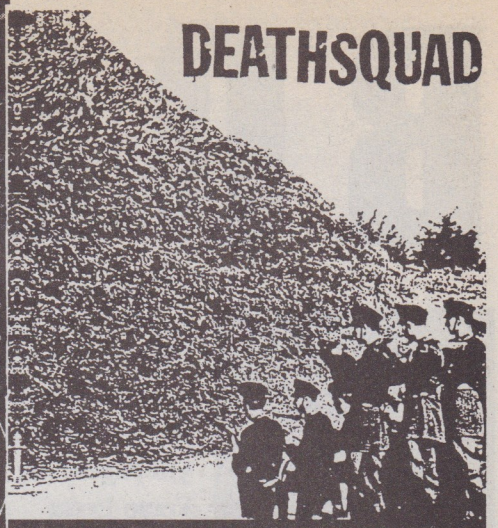

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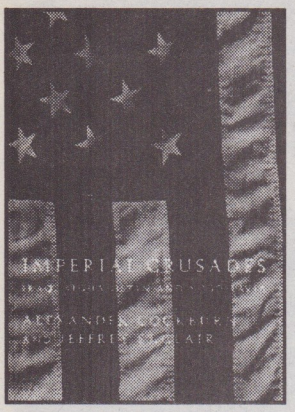


Imperial Crusades: Iraq, Afghanistan and Yugoslavia
Alexander Cockburn and Jeffrey St. Clair
378 pages * $15
Verso Press
180 Varick Street
New York, NY 10014-4606

"I am outraged."

With an election coming up, and each faction of the political spectrum becoming progressively more entrenched in its own respective dogma, it seems that the thesis of almost every nonfiction book released lately boils down to those three words. Now, what comes after that sentence will vary depending on whether you're reading the Michael Moores, the Anne Coulters, the Al Frankens, the Michael Savages, or any of the other bankable talking heads spouting their own particular brand of bile. One would think that such a mass proliferation of anger would be good for fiery political discourse; instead, what stick in the mind most are grade-school attacks on either Bill O'Reilly's pockmarked complexion (from the "left") or Michael Moore's weight (from the "right"). I mean, yes, O'Reilly has terrible skin, and apparently even Ralph Nader claims he encourages his friend Moore to get some exercise. The point, however, is that people appear to be losing sight of some glaring realities, namely that we remain in a seemingly constant state of war, and that, no matter who gets elected, people will continue to die in the name of the United States of America.

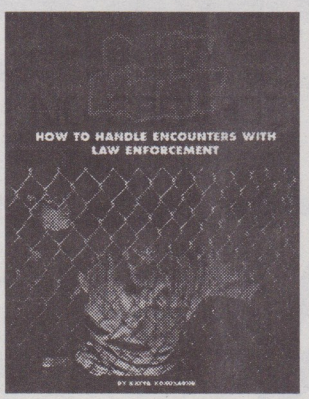
Alexander Cockburn and Jeffrey St. Clair's new book seems designed to blatantly counter this oversight, a fact obvious from one's first glance at the cover, where the title *Imperial Crusades* gets superimposed over the ever-familiar red, white and blue, giving readers pause to wonder why an expression usually associated with English Colonialism or the Middle Ages has been so correlated with the flag of their nation.

Taking short, dated pieces from the print and electronic newsletter *CounterPunch*, which Cockburn and St. Clair co-edit, *Crusades* presents itself as a kind of multi-contributor political diary of the last thirteen years of warfare enacted by the U.S., with writings from former CIA analysts and marines, historians, economists and the like, including the late Edward Said. Beginning with military actions in Yugoslavia and continuing on through the campaigns in Afghanistan and Iraq (the sequel, for those keeping score), Cockburn and St. Clair seemingly leave no stone unturned in their critique of American militarism. Of the many political figures that get "ripped a new one," as the popular expression goes, the *CounterPunch* editors reserve special disdain for those who would hijack the left to put forth pro-war ideals. While criticizing Sen. John McCain, who "shout[s] for 'lights out in Belgrade,'" Alexander Cockburn goes on to say that "McCain is more than matched by Democrats like Senator Carl Levin, or by that brass-lunged fraud from Vermont Bernard Sanders, 'socialist progressive,' who has endorsed Clinton's bombs."

At this point, you should probably be asking, "well, Max, isn't this just the same kind of over-inflated attack we are used to from the afore-mentioned bloated talking heads?" Well, hypothetical reader, I have to admit that you are correct in calling "shenanigans." Though the book maintains its focus remarkably well, there remain instances, especially when Cockburn or St. Clair take the wheel, of the author's bluster getting the better of his rational faculties. For example, on the very first page Cockburn takes the *New York Times* to task, saying "editorial page editor Howell Raines staked out the *Times*' official view that 'for now, NATO must sustain and intensify the bombing.'" While I also try to remain wary of media bias, most people could probably tell you that the editorial page was specifically designed for opinion pieces, and that these opinions hardly reflect any newspaper's "official view."

Moments like these, especially one where the author's fervor somehow gets channeled into the basest kind of cheap shots at the people of Sweden, prevent me from wholeheartedly endorsing the book. However, there remains enough good content to warrant a read. The best pieces come from those once privy to the inner workings of the American war machine, such as Chris White, the former marine, or Ray McGovern, the former senior CIA analyst, and renowned scholars such as Said. Each provides quick, studied bursts of rational and constructive anti-war criticism. This, perhaps, remains the book's strongest asset: that it has, through shorter pieces and a diary format, found a way to simplify and streamline the form of a political treatise, without doing the same thing to the content.

-Max Tremblay



Beat the Heat: How To Handle Encounters With Law Enforcement
192 pages * $14.00
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www.akpress.org
akpress@akpress.org

SHUT YOUR BIG YAP AND KEEP IT SHUT. (Seriously)

Before I start reviewing this book, I should confess that I love cop shows. Not all of them, but there are a few that I never miss. I love The Shield. The gestapo tactics used by the Strike Team don't bother me at all because, as we are shown repeatedly throughout the hour-long program, the people on the receiving end are surely guilty of some heinous crime, so what's the harm if they get knocked around and their constitutional protections against illegal search and seizure are violated? I mean, most people who get arrested are hardly innocents. I also love NYPD Blue. Whenever Sipowicz gets really angry and lets fly one of his classic zingers and maybe practices a little police brutality, I laugh out loud. When he acts out of compassion for

a victim, I share his moral outrage. I also have a hard time changing the channel when Dirty Harry comes on. Go figure.

But, after reading this book, I fear that my enjoyment of these quality television programs might be a thing of the past. At the very least, I could become less fanatical in my appreciation. A lawyer I once knew told me that after working as a public defender for a short time, she could no

longer enjoy such movies as those in the Lethal Weapon franchise and felt diminished respect for those who could. This book may have the same effect with readers.

To paraphrase a tired cliché, if I had a nickel for every person who says they know what to do when they're stopped by the cops, I'd be richer than Dick Cheney. Okay, maybe nearly everyone _knows_ what to do when the cops come calling, but, when push comes to shove, most people blow it. Most people start blabbing right away. We believe the cops when they tell us that it'll go easier for us if we help them out. Or, if we're really innocent, how can telling the truth hurt us?

Anyone who thinks they know everything they need to about their rights, needs to read this book. It is fairly inexpensive and, believe it or not, there are quite a few choice morsels contained that you will find very useful indeed.

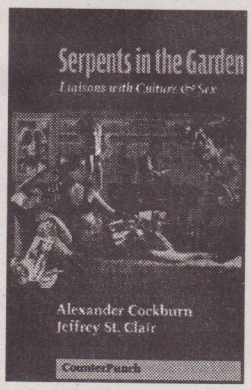
Beat The Heat is clearly marketed towards the minority demographic (the title on the cover is in 1980s-era hip-hop style) as well as activists. Additionally, those who earn a living in the drug trade or by shoplifting would be advised to have a copy handy. However, no matter what your political leanings, Beat The Heat will be appreciated by anyone concerned about constitutional issues as they
relate to searches and arrests.

The main lesson to take away from Beat The Heat is the mantra "I'm going to remain silent. I would like to see an attorney." On the importance of those words, one phrase says it all: The point is not to memorize it until you get it right, but to memorize it until you can't get it wrong. It sounds simple, but when dealing with Johnny Law, sometimes it's tough to stick to your guns.

The book is chock-full of real-life scenarios of civilian encounters with law enforcement. The text is extensively supplemented with comic strips which basically depict what not to do followed by what one should do, which is always to remain silent and request an attorney. A lot of information in the book is common knowledge, but there are sections covering areas which I suspect will be news to many. These would be juvenile rights and those of non-citizens.

Given the current administration and the ongoing erosion of civil rights, this book should be required reading in every civics class and belongs in every library in the land. Fourteen bucks is a small price to pay when you consider how many innocent people are in prison because they signed the wrong form or said too much.

-Ed Hunter



Serpents in the Garden: Liaisons with Culture & Sex
Edited by Alexander Cockburn & Jeffrey St. Clair
$15.95 * 348 pages
CounterPunch
PO Box 228
Petrolia CA 95558
www.counterpunch.org

CounterPunch is a website/newsletter bent on "muckraking with a radical attitude." For six years they have been publishing all manners of articles with this in mind and this is a collection of some of those articles.

As the title of this book implies, the pieces in *Serpents in the Garden* are written by or about radical thinkers and artists existing in a mainstream world. The book is broken down into five main sections: Culture, Music, Art and Architecture, Sex, and Death. The articles themselves are relatively short (few are over 10 pages long) and the subject matter between them varies greatly making this an ideal bathroom reader.

The least thought-provoking but admittedly most engaging part of the book was the music section. Condensed biographies on Sam Cooke, Tammy Wynette and two back-to-back pieces on Bob Dylan tended to date the writers and editors but *The Story Of Death Row Records* kept the section modern enough, if not a little more aggro.

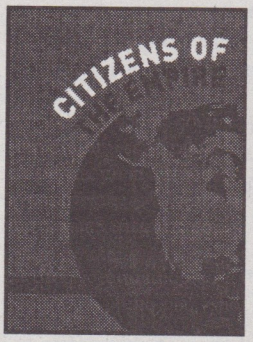
The Art and Architecture collection seemed to be the real guts of the book, with most articles written by the two editors themselves who obviously have a strong affinity for the subjects. But being so steeped in their material left an art layman like myself losing interest as I read, although I imagine anyone loosely intrigued by Frank Lloyd Wright and his association to the FBI or Sigmund Freud's neighborhood would find this section interesting. What I did find fascinating and inspiring in an *Isn't the human spirit just great?!* sort of way was Cockburn's depiction of Robert Ripley (as in Ripley's Believe It Or Not) whose relics and museums were just excuses for traveling the world in search of knowledge, understanding and the thrill of shock and amazement. The article explaining how Salvador Dali was a fascist was a bit absorbing as well.

A few portions of *Serpents...*seemed controversial—the article on how socially and aesthetically ugly the World Trade Towers were and the article defending the rights of sex offenders both come to mind—but each of these were thoughtful and intelligent and at the least worthy of conversation.

In fact, the whole book was thoughtful and intelligent. At times wordy or a little dry, the book still had fun while commenting on everything from John Ashcroft to bestiality to marijuana to Pee Wee Herman and so forth...

Good choice for the intellectual with a short attention span.

-Craigums



Citizens of the Empire: The Struggle to Claim our Humanity
Robert Jensen
144 pages - $11.95
City Lights Books
261 Columbus Avenue
San Francisco, CA 94133

This book landed in my mailbox in just the knick of time. It held some ideas and answers to a question that I had just been asking a politically involved friend, "So, what can we REALLY be doing?" My frustration had been mounting and a sense of hopelessness was taking over because it seemed that no matter what we the people were perpetually organizing ourselves to demand, we're ignored, and worse, beaten and jailed, and those in power just keep on doing as they please.

Citizens of the Empire: The Struggle to Claim our Humanity by Robert Jensen, an associate professor of journalism at the University of Texas at Austin, is not some radical proclamation to overthrow the government. Instead, it's a hope-filled call to action by and for those who believe that facts matter and who strive towards a more directly democratic global society.

The book is written in plain language on purpose. Robert Jensen is a rather sharp professor who could have easily seeped his topic in thick historical analysis, political theory and scholarly jargon but instead wrote to be understood clearly. In doing so, Citizens of the Empire reads with a ton more honesty and emotion than any academic journal could ever muster and Jensen's plain language approach proves one of his main points, that politics is, should be, and can be for the everyday person, not to be left to the ivory tower elites only.

Jensen begins the book with a Preface and an Introduction that emit his passion and bravery. His writing and speaking honestly and bluntly about what it has felt like to live in the United States since 9/11 has been met with harsh criticism, so harsh that one might consider Jensen an exceptionally courageous person. As an appendix, he shares with us the original text of

his brief essay entitled "Stop the Insanity Here," penned and distributed on September 12, 2001, the essay that seems to have launched this book.

Part I of the book looks at two key U.S. political slogans, "the greatest nation on earth/in history" and "support the troops," and one key political concept, patriotism. Jensen offers a critique of the dominant culture's political mythology and suggests new ways for progressive people to respond. Unfortunately, though I was really excited about this part of the book, I don't think the masses are ready for such conceptual deconstruction when they were just up in arms against the guy from California who was simply and logically challenging the "under God" part of the Pledge of Allegiance. Can you imagine what the mainstream media would have made this guy out to be if he'd been challenging the entire pledge itself? Probably the same as they'd be making Jensen out to be for even having thought these anti-patriotism thoughts, let alone having written and published them in this book.

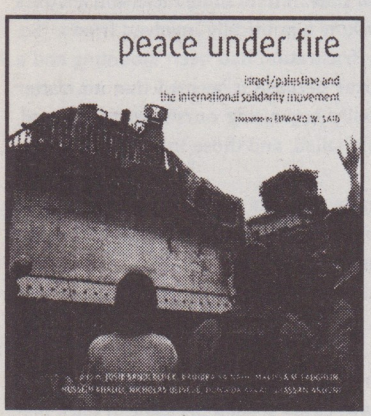
Part II examines twentieth-century U.S. political history and the contemporary university in an effort to understand how we came to this place and how key institutions have failed us. In particular, he puts forth that in the U.S. we have arguably the most expansive free-speech rights in the industrial world and at the same time an incredibly degraded political culture. Quite a paradox to ponder. And Jensen provides several facts, quotes and his own analysis with which to do so.

Part III takes up difficult issues about ourselves and how we live, which we must face if we are to make progress. To his credit, he reminds the reader that lifestyle changes alone are not enough to effect meaningful change.

The book concludes with thoughts on the task that we face as citizens of the empire. If I didn't know better, I'd call Jensen an anarchist of utmost moral character, though he never actually uses the A-word himself. Instead, Jensen is a radical political analyst and social movement theorist, a rare intellectual who in capturing the feelings of a hurt and desperate people, reasonably calls the masses to action.

The ideas in this book are inspiring, even for the most jaded and cynical. For those who are pissed off but who haven't acted, this book will press your anger button to get you started. And for the rest of us, this book gives hope that the question of "What can I do to affect meaningful change?" won't continue to go unanswered, that someday our political culture will get beyond even having to ask that question.

-Jessica Mills



Peace Under Fire: Israel/Palestine and the International Solidarity Movement, Edited by Josie Sandercock, et al.
296 pages
Verso Press
180 Varick Street
New York, NY 10014-4606
www.versobooks.com

When my relatives, co-workers, and random people on the bus talk about the Israel/Palestine conflict, they often say things like, "It's just too complicated," or, "They should just blow up the whole region and make everyone live somewhere else," or "They've hated each other for so long there will never be peace." These statements create and reinforce an easy way of thinking about the conflict: It's too hard to understand, and besides, both sides are acting like children—children with deadly weapons.

However, as many MRR readers already know, although there are many complicated aspects, the basic problem is relatively easy to understand. Palestinians live in poverty, many in refugee camps, and, once they leave the country, they cannot return. Every once in awhile, they throw rocks at passing tanks, and sometimes a few even decide to kill themselves and innocent Israelis. In contrast, Israelis live with reliable running water and electricity, free to come and go as they please, and, not only can they always return to their country, but also anyone who is Jewish can automatically become a citizen. Israeli troops meet boys throwing rocks with tanks and guns. They systemically destroy homes, build barriers, enforce curfews, and fire on innocent civilians, including children and journalists.

Peace Under Fire presents the stories of activists who have rejected the easy, dismissive arguments and see the situation for what it is—both an international crisis and, like the Spanish Civil War before it, an opportunity to risk their lives to make a difference. As members of the International Solidarity Movement, they come from all over the world to protect Palestinian homes, food and water supplies, access to hospitals, and the ability to protest.

Rachel Corrie, who died after Israeli soldiers ran over her with a bulldozer last spring, is perhaps the most well known ISM activist, but this book tells the stories of dozens of others, and their struggles—sometimes to help and sometimes to simply survive. You would expect many of these activists to have a romanticized notion of their involvement, but in these stories, the activists explicitly reject that way of thinking. For them, they are simply doing whatever they can to help out in a desperate situation.

This book collects articles, diary entries, photos and interviews detailing their activism. There's so much here—from detailed accounts of the fight to protect Palestinian olive trees from Israeli contractors and soldiers to tales of liberating land to be used for a soccer field for children. The editors do an amazing job of collecting everything, mixing longer articles with one-paragraph journal entries, in a way that makes this book less of a compilation and more of a narrative. Some of the entries are about frustration, fear and outrage. Some are about the light-hearted moments, when, surrounded by danger, there is time to drink a cup of tea and talk and laugh with friends. Some are so powerful they are impossible to forget, like Trevor Baumgartner's account of seeing a 13-year-old boy shot in the face by an Israeli soldier.

After witnessing the shooting, Baumgartner felt tempted to leave, but then, he said he remembered, "I am my mother's son." He abandoned his hiding place behind a car and walked right up to the soldiers. "I stood there because there is no other place to stand here," he writes. "There is no place for indecision or for the indecisive. In the middle of such irrational violence, there is no rational alternative but to stand between soldiers with guns and boys with stones." He then shouted, "IN THE FACE—YOU SHOT HIM IN THE FACE—IT'S TIME FOR YOU TO GO—YOU SHOT HIM IN THE FACE."

And, if you ever had any doubt about the conflict, consider this. The soldier, hearing Baumgartner's words, looked at him and said, "Where? In the face? Yes!" and gave him the thumbs up.

-Maddy

MOVIES

BRING ME THE HEAD OF GENE SISKEL

CAROLYN KEDDY

ON THE ROAD AGAIN

I have been dying to see **The Brown Bunny** since I heard of the Roger Ebert-Vincent Gallo clash at Cannes Film Festival in 2003. When a mainstream critic like Ebert comes out and says a film is the worst he's ever seen at Cannes, I immediately think there has to be something worth seeing. I am sure he's seen a lot of bad films that haven't caused such a reaction. My coworker and I followed the story by sharing links to the latest news about the Gallo and Ebert feud. Gallo put a curse on Ebert's colon. Ebert said his doctor let him view his colonoscopy and it was more interesting than Gallo's film. How could I not see this film?

Well, it took a long time, but **The Brown Bunny** finally opened in San Francisco this week. I couldn't find anyone willing to go see it with me so I went by myself. Since I already knew about the controversial sex scene, I felt like a pervert going to the theater by myself. The theater was mostly empty with a few scattered couples and groups of people. All I needed was a trenchcoat.

Vincent Gallo proudly announces in the first frame that he is the writer, director, producer and editor of **The Brown Bunny**. He also stars as Bud Clay a motorcycle racer. The first scene is a motorcycle race. Clay loses, but he manages to pop a wheelie before he goes over the finish line. He quietly loads his motorcycle into his van. When he stops at a gas station, he meets a teenage girl named Violet who is working in the convenience store. Bud and Violet chat about him going to Los Angeles for another race. He has to be there in five days. Violet asks him about California, saying she would love to go there. "Why don't you come with me?" he asks. "I don't know you", she replies. He gazes at her, "Please." The whole theater erupted in the giggles. He repeats, "please." When he pleads the third time, "please come with me," Violet is won over and decides to go.

This is the first of three on the road encounters Clay has with women. Not much is said, yet each manages to fall under his spell. Why? He is obviously not charming. It must be his looks. I start noticing that every shot of Clay is done very nicely. There are a lot of close ups. He is shot in profile with the sun reflecting off his hair while he drives the van. The camera longingly follows him while he races his motorcycle across the salt flats until he has disappeared over the horizon. Sure, he looks good, but he's not the most beautiful man who no woman can resist.

Most of **The Brown Bunny** takes place in the van on the road from New Hampshire to California. The strip malls of America's highways are shown through a dirty windshield. The tediousness of the solo cross-country drive is heightened by the lack of sound. There is the constant grumble of the engine and the noise of the highway. There is no dialogue during these scenes. Clay doesn't talk to himself nor is there a voiceover narration of inner thoughts. There is just the monotonous silence of the road. Some parts of the film are so quiet that I could hear the music from **Donnie Darko: The Director's Cut,** which was playing in the next theater seeping through the walls. Even when music did occasionally kick in, I barely noticed it.

I went into **The Brown Bunny** knowing almost every scene in the film. I hate knowing so much about a film I have not seen. My mind starts drifting off onto other things. What surprised me was the ending. It doesn't end with the much hyped blowjob scene. The film wraps up in a strange way. It almost explains what we have seen before us, but it doesn't manage to bring the film to a conclusion. I instantly thought "well, I guess that is why he is so lonely, messed up and treats women so badly," but after further thinking about it, I am not buying it. Gallo wants us to immediately understand his character and spontaneously sympathize with him without giving us any build up. But you can't. He's too unlikable. (www.brownbunny.net)

I went to see **Code 46** without knowing anything about it apart from it being directed by Michael Winterbottom and written by Frank Cottrell Boyce, the team responsible for one of my favorite films of this decade **24 Hour Party People**. I realize it is a very flimsy reason, but what else did I have to do?

Code 46 is set in the future. Tim Robbins plays William an investigator who solves his cases by ESP. He is sent to find out who is responsible for stealing "papelles" (a passport to leave Shanghai) from the agency that manufactures them known as The Sphinx. William asks his suspects to tell them something personal about themselves and from this small bit of information he is able to figure out that a woman named Maria is the one. William is attracted to Maria, however, so he doesn't turn her in. He claims another worker is the guilty one. When Maria leaves work, he follows her.

It should be noted that the title for the film **Code 46** is explained before the film begins. People have reproduced and been cloned so much in this future that there is a law forbidding people who have more than a 25% DNA match to have sex. If the female becomes pregnant and it is discovered that the parents' DNA is too close, the couple has a code 46 violation and the baby will be aborted. You can probably guess what happens when William and Maria get together.

Code 46 is predictable with that one regard, but what follows is an involved game of memory erasing and constant searching for that missing event. It is a creepy love story. There is a lot of driving and road footage in this film too. An extra bonus for punk rockers would be an unexpected Mick Jones cameo. While Maria and William are at a karaoke bar celebrating Maria's birthday, "Should I Stay Or Should I Go" starts playing in the background. Cut to Mick Jones sitting on a barstool holding a martini glass, singing the song.

Beautiful Frenzy is a glimpse into the music of The Ex. It is not a documentary that tells the history of the band; It is simply a document of some live performances and touring footage. Two Swedish directors Christina Hallstrom and Mandra Waback followed the band around the US and Europe for two years.

Knowing the Ex as a political band, there is very little mention of politics in **Beautiful Frenzy**. Some interesting comments do stick out. The guitarist Terrie's admission that he bought a very expensive guitar that he had to order from the US before he even knew how to play seems a bit out of joint with band's staunch DIY ethic. Singer GW Sok admits he signed a contract to have the band perform at a punk festival in 1979 even before they had instruments. He explains they had a name so they could spray paint it around the city. That admission is a clever indication of their future stature as improvisational musicians. Later when bassist Luc is asked if he knows the notes for a Russian piece that they are going to perform, he calmly states no. He will use his own notes.

While I am watching band documentaries, I can't help but wonder why a piece of footage is included. What is the filmmaker trying to do? A random shot of Katrin watching a self cleaning toilet seat may be fun, but I can't help but think that it was included simply due to lack of other footage. I know it is because this a low budget film, but I still want to be inspired by the band and have the immediate desire to go put on their records. Unfortunately, **Beautiful Frenzy** did not move me in that direction. I felt like I was in Bud Clay's van again. ($18ppd., Honey Bear Records, 1730 E. Oltorf #135, Austin, TX 78741, www.honeybearrecords.net)

I am always looking for films to review. If you made one, send a copy to me c/o MRR, PO Box 406760, San Francisco, CA 94146-0760. E-mail me at carolynmrr@juno.com if you have a film screening in San Francisco. I will go see it.

FINAL CUT BY STEVEN SPINALI

MEDIA BLITZ

What if the war in Iraq weren't being fought for the reasons touted by the Bush administration?

Clear-minded analysts and citizens knew the score long ago, but that hasn't stopped a sizable portion of the American electorate from accepting the Republican party line. Robert Greenwald (**Outfoxed**) offers his heavily researched slant in **Uncovered: The War in Iraq**. Calling on a range of voice from Nixon White House staffer John Dean to an especially articulate group of liberal voices, he draws the inevitable conclusion: the war on Iraq was conceived on the very day after 9/11—in total absence of any data that Saddam Hussein had any of the infamous "weapons of mass destruction."

Uncovered... sifts through the evidence—most of it familiar by now, but some not. It offers a comprehensive history lesson on the unpopular war, but some of its more interesting revelations have to do with to the mindset of the Bush White House. From early on, the administration was in lockstep about the threat of Iraq, and Greenspan's research shows how intelligence reports were routinely edited to portray a narrow set of conclusions.

True, Iraq used some of these weapons against it own population; but a telling photo of Donald Rumsfeld shaking hands with Saddam suggests that the U.S. knew about this all along and tolerated it. In Colin Powell's widely publicized address to the United Nations, we were told that Iraq had thousands of gallons of deadly nerve gas; we weren't told that the gas canisters have a shelf life of only three months, and would be at best a decade old. And there's the infamous announcement that Saddam had access to Nigerian nuclear materials—information that turned out to be based on obviously forged documents of dubious origin.

It's difficult to tell whether the Bush White House had blinkered vision, or blatantly lied; Greenwald's evidence points to a combination of both at different times and on different levels.

Certainly the most complete assay of Iraqi military strength came from several bouts of western arms inspections. These surveys demonstrated a strong measure of Iraqi deceit; but they also showed that the country had no realistic access to weapons of mass destruction. Greenwald finds it ironic that the government's best evidence was ignored in favor of evidence the CIA judged sketchy at best.

The film is best when it's drolly sarcastic. Over a period of three minutes, we see snippets from administration press conferences and speeches. They start with unequivocal statements that Saddam Hussein has vast stockpiles of biological agents and fissionable material. Then, they announce they know they'll find them. Then, they *think* they'll find them, but it's gonna take time; the Iraqis are better off now, right? Finally, Bush and his spokesmen do a complete flip-flop, admitting that they probably won't find anything at all.

This is, of course, what Scott Ritter (one of the original arms investigators) and the next group found out. Ritter, himself a conservative, says that CNN had accused him "of drinking Saddam Hussein's Kool-aid" for criticizing the data that aluminum tubes were not being used for nuclear development.

And now, instead of looking for weapons of mass destruction, the administration is baffled why the Iraqis hate the US. A few argue that Iraq, formerly a state intolerant of terrorist groups, has now become a hotbed of terrorist cells.

Uncovered: The War on Iraq has one failing it has no control over: as a partisan view of the war, it's unlikely to be seen by anyone except those already cognizant of the facts. While it contains some familiar material, rarely has the case on Iraq been stated so clearly and by from such a wide range of voices. (Available October on DVD at www.truthuncovered.com.)

You may have seen the now-classic documentary **Manufacturing Consent**; Robert Kane Pappas now come up with a perfect companion piece. **Orwell Rolls in His Grave** takes a potentially arid topic – bias in journalism—and updates the state of affairs with Orwellian counterpoint. Things may not be as bad as they are in *1984*, but Pappas explores a territory that may be every bit as worrisome.

When Ronald Reagan launched the juggernaut of deregulation in the early 80s, it seemed to many a good idea. Before long, Pappas says, there was a fever of corporate buyouts that soon bled into the world of mass media. The reason for deregulation was ostensibly to "increase diversity," but soon large corporations bought up a mass of unaffiliated stations in a feeding frenzy. Soon, over 90% of media outlets would be owned by a handful of corporations.

Pappas takes us into the capital, where lines of underemployed in shabby clothes line up for places at legislative sessions. The queue is deceptive: it's actually composed of "place-holders." Soon, media lobbyists in business suits take their place.

As it happens, media is one of the most powerful lobbies in Washington. But for Pappas, this comes at a cost: How can we rely on our reporting if big media has such a close relationship to government?

An aggravating web of legalisms muddy the process. A corporation, by law, is considered a "person." By extension, media lawyers argue that regulating or controlling media output is a violation of free speech. The irony is that the Fifth Amendment, designed to protect freedom of dialog, is being employed to *reduce* the range of information we get.

As evidence, Pappas offers the most obvious example: the controversial 2000 presidential elections. In Florida, we're shown voting machines in primarily black areas that spit out a ballot as invalid if there were any errors; in white precincts, all ballots were accepted, regardless of errors. When the difference in votes between Bush and Gore shrank to as little as a few hundred, the application of racially selective voting procedures probably decided an American presidency.

CBS news editor Greg Palast received information that Jeb Bush had been intimately involved in these irregularities. With a single denial, CBS dropped their investigation.

When Republican hopes were at their lowest and the election was too close to call, their lapdog Fox News chimed in with the prediction that Bush had actually won the election. In a knee-jerk response, the major networks followed suit. Pappas convincingly argues that fraud conspired with a compliant media to allow a de facto coup. Soon, the Colin Powell's brother would be installed in the FCC to grease the way for further media buyouts.

Meanwhile, an American population increasingly feels that the blare of media has all but drowned out their own voice. Pappas suggests that the great shame of our "media-cracy" is that this apathy results in poor voter turnouts, which makes matters even worse.

With revelations like these, **Orwell...** almost has the opposite of its intended effect. With vast conglomerates controlling what we hear, you find yourself wandering whether your vote or voice really has an effect after all.

Orwell Turns in His Grave slowly evolves into Pappas' personal (and admittedly partial) view of politics observed through the lens of mass media. I'm not a great fan of George Orwell as a novelist (though I agree with his ideas), so it's a nice surprise that the film makes only glancing references to the writer's work.

A few critics have objected that the documentary uses a few Orwellian techniques of its own. Pappas does call on a cherry-picked set of sources and events, but it all goes to show you how divisive the issue is. Personal freedom, the gaping chasm between the rich and the poor, foreign wars and occupation—these hinge on media coverage and acceptance..

Pappas sees the most damaging effect of media control as the "narrowing of debate." When news items fall outside a certain range of political subjects (usually defined as Democrat vs. Republican), they're frequently glossed over.

Orwell Rolls in His Grave is presented in a dense set of questions and concerns—some not completely contextualized, but most hitting their targets. Its story is one of self-discovery for the filmmaker, whose worst fears were gradually confirmed over years of research. Its dry, talking-heads approach ends up being utterly compelling, and far grimmer than anything on Michael Moore's palate. You only wish Pappas had Moore's talent for snagging media attention.

(The DVD is available from orwellrollsinhisgrave.com.)

Reactions? Email me at anywhichway@myway.com.

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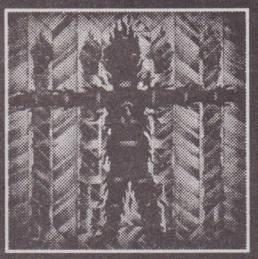

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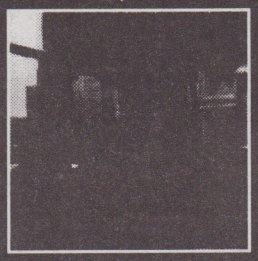

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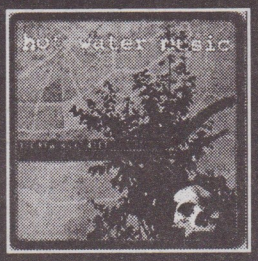

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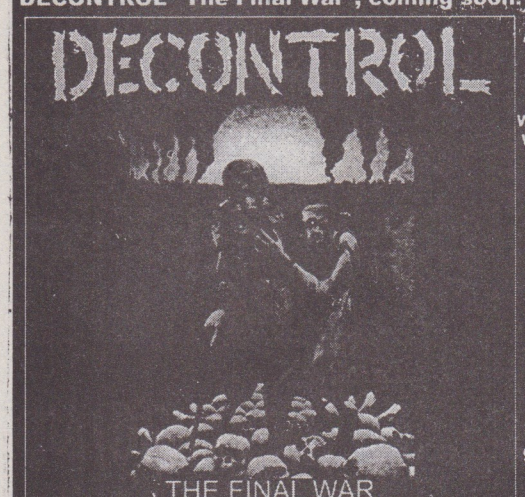

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12 SUMMERS OLD – "When The Romance Ends" CD

Good melodic pop punk in the OVER IT vein. Well-placed guitar lines with a few tempo changes here and there. Think SAMIAM with smoother vocals. I dig the tight, catchy stuff and these guys dish it out. (RL)
(Anomer, www.anomerrecords.com)

13TH VICTIM – "Out for a Kill" EP

Bare-bones, tough-guy punk that, sadly, does little for me (I didn't like the MEATSHITS, either). Lyric-wise they're on about "Fashion Punx," "Death Dealers," etc. The DWARVES this ain't. (JH)
(Sick of Talk, PO Box 9723, Reno, NV 89507, **www.the13thvictim.com**)

5678's – "Woo Hoo/Guitar Date"

A couple of tracks from the vaults on a label from Jolly Old, where mayhaps the back catalog of the 5678s is harder to obtain. Good stuff, but hardly the place to start buying for any waifs just discovering the 5678s via *Kill Bill* mania. (DD)
(Sweet Nothing, Cargo UK, 17 Heathmans Road, London SW6 4TJ, ENGLAND, info@cargorecords.co.uk)

ABOUT THE FIRE – "Rites of Passage" CD

No. No. No! Sounds like HOT WATER MUSIC meets FOO FIGHTERS, meets something much heavier; there is definitely a metal edge to it. No thank you. The playing is really good and solid, and the band doesn't suck but I still don't want to listen to it. (WR)
(HCNL, PO Box 36997, Indianapolis, IN, www.hcnl.com)

AGATHOCLES – "Razor Sharp Daggers" LP

OK—"Fuck the blue rabbit"? What? What the hell is that? Apparently it's part of "the whole liberal team" but I'll be damned if I have any idea what they're talking about. Well, if it wasn't enough that these guys are still releasing three new records a week, now they're repressing old AGATHOCLES albums as well. This one's from 1995, and I have to say it's one of the better AGATHOCLES records I've heard. There's actually a fair amount of diversity on the tracks (for them anyway), a lot of this is down-right catchy and their lyrics as always are right-on socially and politically. Surely you need at least one AGATHOCLES record in your collection—might as well be this one. (EL)
(S.O.A., c/o Paolo Petralia, Via Oderisi Da Gubbio 67/69, 00146, ITALY, www.soarecords.it)

AGGRA MAKABRA / DISPLACED – split LP

This is a multi-DIY label release of two pretty different political punk bands. AGGRA MAKABRA play fairly dreary anarcho punk, while DISPLACED are a little more upbeat and melodic, though they are definitely still very angry. This comes with a very nice lyric/info booklet and it seems like everyone's hearts are in the right place. (AM)
(Alerta Antifascista, PO Box 2318, 24913 Flensburg, GERMANY)

AGHAST-"Sacrificed On The Altar Of State Power" EP

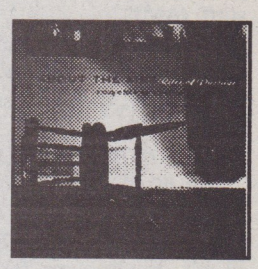
Now this is Distort at its finest—primal feedback, amps at no less than ten, and enough energy and catchy songwriting to distinguish one song from the next. AGHAST definitely favor the likes of such bands as DISCLOSE, CONFUSE, GAI and ATROCIOUS MADNESS, and also add some rhythm to their approach. My favorite song is "Arrested by the Pigs," because of the personal lyrics, "your whole sense of security gone in an instant." I imagine seeing these guys new record on Whisper in Darkness, or Hardcore Holocaust, they definitely deserve it. More noise less war! (WK)
(Agipunk, www.agipunk.com)

ALLIANCE – "Disborder" LP

I love shit like this, smash the state melodic hardcore punk rock that would have me dancing in the streets as the mobs strung up the man. From Germany, ALLIANCE play a style that would go well with any SIN DIOS fan out there, but the politically potent lyrics are in English not German (or Spanish). Right on! (JF)
(www.unityprioritytrecords.com)

ALLIANCE / LOS DESTRUCTOS – split EP

This is some kind of post-Cold War Glasgow/Berlin



coalition of the stinking. Germany's ALLIANCE are all over the map—their first song sounds like some melodic PINHEAD GUNPOWDER Cometbus-core, but then they set phasers to raging thrash and blast through a couple of hardcore toe-tappers. On the flip it's the pride of the Hamilton Accies Firm, LOS DESTRUCTOS, with their tuneful blend of streetpunk that could draw comparisons to EX CATHEDRA or the NEWTOWN GRUNTS (although there's no ska influence, thank the gods) purely because they like to sing in their own quaint regional dialect. Don't they know that they'll go farther if they affect some kind of transatlantic twang a la SHEENA EASTON? Actually I'd liken LOS DESTRUCTOS to a band like SMALLTOWN, who know that streetpunk anthems can benefit from hooks and a melody. Good stuff. (AM)
(Self Destruct, T. Duffin, Flat 0/2, 146 Darnley Street, Glasgow, G41 2SX, SCOTLAND, UK, www.losdestructos.com)

A.N.S. – "The Pool" CDEP

All in all, A.N.S. sounds like they could have come out of 1984. They probably listen to a lot of JFA, TSOL and BLACK FLAG...maybe some Texas bands, too. They also incorporate surf in a lot of the same ways DEAD KENNEDYS did. This is pretty straightforward, though. A big skateboarding theme, too. These guys like to skate. Not bad at all. (WR)
(no address)

ATEH – " Aniquilacion Total De La Especie Humana" CD

Nineteen tracks (plus some live stuff on the twentieth track) of crunchy, fast punk with an edge of crust from Barcelona, Spain. A mix of harsh female and male vocals play off each other well. Even though almost all the lyrics are in Spanish, it is easy to tell from the photos and layout that they are quite political. (RC)
(Oscura Sonrisa, c/o Remei, 64-08500 Vic, Barcelona SPAIN, oscurasonrisa.cjb.net)

BERZERK – "A.E.I.J.N" EP

It's funny to see a record that uses imagery of Bill Clinton instead of W. I think that's kind of cool. There's just a big-ass drawing of him randomly on the back. Also surprising to see a record from BERZERK, a band I figured ceased to exist years ago. They have an 80s hardcore punk feel with female vocals. Maybe, for lack of a better comparison, they remind me of NAKED AGGRESSION but more hardcore. BERZERK really doesn't do much for me, though. Layout, for the most part, looks like a last-minute computer job. (WR)
(Recess, www.recessrecords.com)

BLACK LUNG-"System Shutdown" EP

BLACK LUNG plays a mix of old school hardcore, mid 80s thrash, and some grindcore. Lyrics about parents leaving, fear, evil, and of course sacred hate, they do tend to be a little confusing though. The standout song is the title track "System Shutdown" which has a pretty awesome guitar hook and seems to be recorded a little different from the rest of the songs. It says that this was recorded while Leo was on parole, so hopefully he will stay out of prison long enough to see this band mature as all bands do over time. (WK)
(Bad People, PO Box 480931, Denver, CO 80248-0931)

BLOODTIES – "Dead To Me" CD

Fast, heavy, metallic hardcore with throaty, barked vocals that chugs along quite nicely. Though there is little variation from song to song, they hammer along pretty quickly and don't get dragged down with a bunch of long, tedious breakdowns. I can hear some HATEBREED influence with their style, but BLOODTIES are more straightforward in their presentation. (RC)
(Counterintelligence, counterintelligencehq.com)

BOILS / THUMBS UP – split EP

On paper, I like the BOILS: rough East Coast working-class street punk. On vinyl, I just find them lacking something. I mean, it's good and all, but just doesn't make me jump out of my chair. THUMBS UP fare better on this disc with some ripping skate-core, like a less frenetic CUT THE SHIT. (TB)
(www.knifeordeathrecords.com)

BORED! – "Negative Waves" CD

A reissue of the 1989 LP by this hard rocking Australian punk band. BORED! takes the archetype created by the STOOGES and MC5 and reinterprets it in their own down-under style. A few too many guitar solos and one too many AC/DC covers for my taste, but this album rocks straight through without ever letting up. As Ryan Wells just noted, if more bands today listened to the STOOGES instead of The HELLACOPTERS there would be many more bands like BORED!, and we'd be better off for it. Also included are five videos. (CK)
(Bang!, PO Box 166, Santurtzi 48980 Bizkaia, Basque Country, SPAIN)

BOXINGWATER / MISSIONSHIFTER – "No Time Like The Present" EP

Supposedly this EP comes with a bonus CD-R containing bonus tracks and some political content. What I will be reviewing here is the vinyl content, because I hate CD-R's and love petroleum by-products. Now onto the review. BOXINGWATER is from Richmond, Virginia, and boy do they sound like it. As a band, they use AVAIL choruses as their starting point and go on from there. Now, as one who still actively listens to their AVAIL LPs this is just fine by me, especially since they kept the political content. MISSIONSHIFTER, from who knows where, also have a definite Richmond sound, but theirs is more STRIKE ANYWHERE crossed with SIXER, once again with political content. Overall it comes across as none to shabby and worth checking out. (JF)
(Overlook/Spent, PO Box 4444, Salem, MA 01097)

BRUCE BANNER / SOUND LIKE SHIT – split EP

Blllleeeeaaaaarrrrgggggghhhhhh! SOUND LIKE SHIT from Japan blows your eardrums out with an onslaught of raw, chaotic (dare I say it?) power violence. Nine songs of craziness so fast, they will have you reaching over thinking that the record is on the wrong speed. BRUCE BANNER follows up with six songs that were recorded back in 2001. Fast and crazy with a NEGAZIONE cover thrown in for good measure. Right on! (RC)
(Throw Up)

THE BRUTALITIES – "Police Brutality" EP

Mid-tempo punk rock played by some spiky-topped Italians, which is nice to see because despite that country's incredible punk tradition (see WRETCHED, S.I.B., SHOTGUN SOLUTION, et al), it has all but fallen off of the punk rock map. The echo on the vocals makes this sound older-than-it-is in a good way (except for the downright bizarre vocal effect on the first song on the B-side), but this band could stand to speed things up and put a bit more "chaos non musica" (or some guitar hooks) into it. All in all, a bit tame. (GN)
(Against U Bastards, ubastards@email.it)

EL BUZZARD – "Tranquilizante del Elefante" CDEP

Decent but fairly generic stoner rock here from this San Jose outfit. Forgoing the stoner staple of lengthy songs, most tracks here don't break the two-minute mark, and while brevity is always to be applauded, it kinda makes the songs go by without making any impact. Still, it's not bad; I'll recommend this for fans of BRAINOIL, BONGZILLA, KARP, and 16 if you just cannot get enough of this no matter how hard you try. (EL)
(Electric Human Project, 500 S. Union St, Wilmington, DE 19805, electrichumanproject.com)

CARPENTER ANT – "I Still Have Drive" CD

All right, it is obvious that these kids like skateboarding and punk rock, therefore they score two-for-the-team from the get go. There are a total of twelve songs here, including an

I HATE YOU cover. Overall, most of the songs were mid-tempo in pace. While I certainly don't think this is bad, I generally prefer for my punk to be more wild and chaotic, like a swift kick in the pants. In the end I thought these songs started to drag along. (RC)
(Doppelganger, 803 Saint John St, Allentown, PA 18103, www.doppelgangerx.com)

CELEBRITY MURDERS – "The Island Of Man-Eating Rats" EP

Three originals and a LIFES BLOOD cover. This is dense, punishing, no-frills fast hardcore with vocals that remind me of early BORN AGAINST. What's with one-sided 7"s? Right now, I really want to flip it over and hear four more songs, not look at some artwork, however pretty it may be. (AM)
(Chainsaw Safety, PO Box 260318, Bellerose, NY 11426, www.chainsawsafetyrecords.com)

THE CHRONICS – "Suggested for Mature Audiences" LP

Somebody forgot to tell THE CHRONICS that Italians don't know how to play punk rock. This is fortunate for you, as this is pretty damn good record, though tough to attach a label to. I can't figure out if the vocals remind me of that dead AC/DC guy (Bon Scott) or Feargal Sharkey (of UNDERTONES fame). Either way, they are distinctive. Musically, it reminds me of THE STOOGES, though I'm not sure I could tell you why. Maybe it's just that it's a real full sound. Not coincidentally, they cover THE STOOGES' "TV Eye". All this from three Italian dudes, who were never told that they can't play punk rock. (KK)
(Demolition Derby, PB 4005, 2800 Mechelen 4, BELGIUM, www.demderby.com)

CONFIDENTIAL – "International Businessmen" CD

Sounds a lot like something Epitaph Records would have tried to get me to listen to when I was 12, by stuffing free samplers in my hands at any given opportunity. I figure this is probably what PULLEY sounds like. Reminds me at times of newer AFI. Sounds faked and most of all, boring. I've given up trying to find something interesting to say about albums like this…there's nothing to dig for. This CD sucks. (WR)
(www.intlbmen.com)

DS-13 - "Asian Album" CD

Listen and learn as DS-13 slash and burn their way through a 34-track assault of relentlessly vicious and intense hardcore. Homegrown Records of Singapore brings us this post-mortem release of non-stop mayhem and terror, unleashing 33 studio tracks of Swedish perfection; there's the entire *Vad Vet Vi Om Kriget* LP, tracks from the *Histeria*, Coalition, Pusmort, and the *Spankin' Nurse* comps, plus a thirteen song live set. You've had to have had your head buried so uncomfortably far up somebody's ass to have ignored the energy and rage these Swedes pounded out. Could they be anymore pissed than this? I need not explain any further. Really, the only reason not to check out this CD is because, well...because we all know tracking down the vinyl will get you laid *so* much more. (VH)
(Homegrown, BLK 111, Yishun Ring Rd, #02-367, SINGAPORE 760111)

DEAD ENDS – "No One Gets Out Alive" EP

I had to double check that this hadn't been pressed on a lump of dirt, but no, it appears to be vinyl. *Extremely* rough punk rock that sounds like a catchier ANTI NOWHERE LEAGUE without the leather and dog collars. Handmade covers, recorded in someone's bedroom, geezers with BLITZ t-shirts...it's punk as fuck and actually really, really good. Imagine if Billy Childish recorded the VIRUS in his bathroom and you'd be getting there. (TB)
(deadends1313@hotmail.com)

DEMOB – "Contractual Obligations" CD

A collection of studio and live tracks from this British band circa 1981. While you probably know them from their hit "No Room For You" on the *Punk & Disorderly* comp, DEMOB cranked out a number of tunes that were underproduced and political with a little No Future records sound in the mix. The early studio stuff is great—most notably their *Anti-Police* and *No Room For You* EPs. The live tracks are so-so. The reunion studio tracks are okay but way more produced than the early stuff and have a more straight-forward UK punk sound. Grab this disc for the nine early studio tracks and consider it a score. (RL)
(Grand Theft Audio, 501 West Glenoaks Blvd, PMB 313, Glendale, CA 91202)

DEPRESSOR / UNHOLY GRAVE – split EP

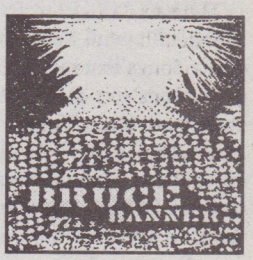
A cross-continental split that's been a few years in the making, here we have UNHOLY GRAVE doing more of what they do best— grind, grind, and grind some more. There's nothing overly amazing about this batch except that the "singing" and lyrics of "Motorcharged," a tribute to MOTORHEAD, are pretty funny: "Thanx for the music I love to listen, It really refreshes me and makes me…Motorcharged!!" Meanwhile, San Francisco's own DEPRESSOR delivers three songs of churning mid-paced heaviness with interesting lyrical topics and some mean metal riffs. Overall a pretty decent split. (EL)
(Nuclear BBQ Party, noiseparty@yahoo.com)

DESTRUCTIONS END – "Prepare To Die!" LP

Whoa! Do you dig crossover thrash? If so, this record is going to be right up your alley. Taking a cue from MUNICIPAL WASTE, this foursome thrashes hard through eleven songs including a BEYOND POSSESSION cover. With songs like "Crossover Mayhem," you know what these tunes are going to be like. If you ever come across these kids they will probably impress you with their knowledge of CRYPTIC SLAUGHTER and EXODUS. (RC)
(Mike Fitzgerlald's Crazy Bros., 652 Evelyn Ave, East Meadow, NY 11554)

DETERMINATION – "...Push It as Far as You Can" EP

Attention Hardcore Bands: When first getting together with your bandmates to discuss what you want your band to sound like, please make sure the person naming the songs is at least somewhat versed in the classics of your band's said genre. Naming your song "Friend or Foe" and having it not be a NEGATIVE APPROACH or AGNOSTIC FRONT cover means that



either A) You lack roots, or B) You assume your song is of the same caliber, and therefore worthy of such a title. Either way, you will look foolish. DETERMINATION plays pretty good fast hardcore punk that reminds me most of YOUTH BRIGADE (DC). Never underestimate the importance of basic research. (CC)
(Broken Heart, c/o Grisu, Johann Strauss Gasse 1/2/8, A-2460 Bruck/Leitha, AUSTRIA)

DEVIL DOLLS – "All Dolled Up" 2xEP

I've ranted for so long about how I just don't understand the double 7" format that I believe it has now become expected of me. So, in the interest of space and time, let's consider that done, okay? The pink picture sleeve gave me an idea that I might be in for some 60s inspired garage rock. Not so. This is mid-tempo, 70s style punk rock. When I say 70s style punk rock, I mean that it has many different facets. It's rock'n'roll at times, pub rock at other times, power pop still other times and punk rock the rest of the time. It's also fucking brilliant at all times. And if that's not enough, it's got both male and female lead vocals. In this case, and in this case only, the double 7" format is twice as good as the single 7". (KK)
(Corduroy, 38 Advantage Rd, Highett, VIC 3190, AUSTRALIA, www.corduroy.com.au)

DOMINATRIX / THE HAGGARD – split EP

A well-paired and right-on match-up of queer punk bands from Brazil and the United States, I will have to file this record under, "things I wish I liked more than I actually do." DOMINATRIX, from Brazil, win the battle-of-the-split with some moderately tempo'd, pretty songs that remind me of mid-90s post-grrrl bands like DAHLIA SEED or the Kaia songs on later TEAM DRESCH albums, while the HAGGARD play the sort of hardcore/art-punk hybrid with weird time changes and noodly guitar parts found on their earlier releases. I find myself wishing that their side was more *punk* than it actually is, because when they slow things up the songs drag. This record is ok by me if only for the fact that it reminds me of the music that I....uh...grew up to. (GN)
(Vida Loca, Casella Postale 17033-00189, Roma, Grottarossa, ITALY, www.vidalocarecords.com)

DONNYBROOK – "There's No Love For The Insincere" EP

Hard and heavy fist-swinging hardcore from Southern California. Musically, DONNYBROOK takes cues from bands like MADBALL, and then kicks it down as a six-piece band (including two vocalists). Pretty straightforward and solid for a hardcore band, but the lyrics for "What's A Little Blood" left me a little unsettled. The chorus is, "This is your time swing for blood...what's a little blood between the ones we love," and the song is all about encouraging people to go nuts in the pit and beat the shit out of each other (but have respect and keep it fun). I just don't get it. Getting kicked or punched hard enough at a show to make me bleed just doesn't sound like a good time, or something that needs to be encouraged. (RC)
(1917, PO Box 2511, El Segundo, CA 90245)

DRONGOS FOR EUROPE – "Barcode Generation" CD

This UK band goes back to punk's early days. Although their early stuff had a primal feel, this is a bit more chainsaw punk, with heavy guitar, screaming vocals, and chant choruses. Think EXPLOITED, GBH, and UK SUBS. Good UK punk. (RL)
(Dislocate, PO Box 321, Durham, DH7 0YG, UNITED KINGDOM, www.dislocate.co.uk)

DSB – Substitute CD

What can I say about this incredible band that hasn't been said before? This CD, like their live show, gives them a larger than life appearance, as it comes handsomely packaged in a large cardboard case with a thick booklet that nicely gives a nod to the artwork from classic Japanese punk comp *The Punx*. There are twelve anthemic classics on this CD altogether, the first nine culled from their now impossible to find early cassette demos, the *Radical Sharp Shot* EP, and comp appearances. It seems to be more of a "best of" the out-of-print DSB than a complete collection, as the discography provided in the booklet shows that a lot of early DSB songs are not on this. The three tracks are also excellent, and are intense in a way that the last couple of DSB seven inches haven't been. The booklet also comes with lots of pictures from their US tours, which include lots of smiling, familiar faces, and a reprint of their *MRR* interview. No one who saw this band either here or on the East Coast (Live and Loud!) will ever forget them. Radical Punx Never Die! (GN)
(Bloodsucker, 1-16-403 Kununoski-Chou Nishi Ku, Hiroshima City, JAPAN 733-0002, www.bloodsucker-record.com)

DYING IN YOUR BEAUTY SLEEP - "9,999 Ways to Die" CD

Thirteen tracks of grindy, blastbeating, death-metal stylings with cookie monster vocals. Evil in an almost black metal way. A cover of GG Allin's "Die When You Die" is a nice touch. This thing is growing on me. GODSTOMPER maybe a reference point if one needs to be made. They seem to be a two-piece with a borrowed bass player on these recordings. Some pretty good tracks here, but thirteen may be a bit much for me. Would have made a great EP if you ask me. (RR)
(www.resident_records.com)

EASY ACTION - "Dead Of Night/ Worse For You"

All right! I love EASY ACTION. John Brannon, formerly of NEGATIVE APPROACH and LAUGHING HYENAS, is still up to the same old thing, and I wouldn't want it any other way. His pained, angry, and powerful vocals are backed by a rockin', distorted, and—dare I say—bluesy band. The songs are slow, but intense. I could listen to this all day. (CK)
(Empirical)

THE EDDIE HASKELS – "Dumpster Divin'" CD

Great classic-sounding punk with a UK feel. Think the BOYS and the VIBRATORS, as well as the DEAD BOYS. Not bad for a band from Oakland! Mid-tempo so the tunes sink in, this is kind of like when US BOMBS started and were fresh although dated musically. A strong punk full length. (RL)
(Speedway Music, 108 Paseo De San Antonio, San Jose, CA 95113, www.eddiehaskells.org)

EKKAIA- "Demasiado Tarde Para Pedir Perdon" LP

This record looks fucking great, from the embossed band name, to the dreary death camp gatefold layout, to the record sleeve having lyrics translated in four different languages! EKKAIA play the dark, moody, heavy, sometimes melodic post-crust that bands like TRAGEDY and REMAINS OF THE DAY popularized all over the world it seems. That isn't a jab in any way to this band in particular, it just seems like the genre could use a little different angle to create some new excitement within itself (not to mention cool buzzwords other than "this sounds like TRAGEDY"). EKKAIA's lyrics are what I really respect about the band, they are filled with so much passion and rage that you can't help but relate if you are a punk. This is what it is all about. Did I mention there are two vocalists both with varying degrees of high screamy vocals? I've had the pleasure of seeing this band two times and they put on a mighty show with a lot of intensity, and they also happen to be one of the most active bands nowadays, so support them. (WK)
(Stonehenge, BP 46, 33031 Bordeaux Cedex, FRANCE, www.stonehengerecords.com)

ENVENOMED – "Reject & Refuse" EP

Pretty tepid crust/grind here from Cincinnati. It's got all the elements except the creativity—heavy sound, astute political lyrics and double kick (which you know I love), but ultimately the songs are generic and uninspiring. The vocals are really low, almost death growls, with a high pitched cackler trading off during the choruses, but really, the riffs are about as exciting as mashed potatoes. (EL)
(Torture Garden Picture Company, 2039 River Downs Ct., Forest Hill, MD 21050, torturegardenpictures@hotmail.com)

EVIL ROBOT US – "In Song and Dance" EP

Here's an interesting one: a really mellow record with some punch. EVIL ROBOT US, to me sounds like they may be part of the first wave of bands influenced by the whole Plan-It-X records crew. Actually, I'm certain that that's what it is. It sounds *exactly* like a mix between the early AGAINST ME recordings and when Hannah sings in SISSIES, THE DEVIL IS ELECTRIC, etc. Exactly. So, yeah, they are doing the whole acousti-punk thing, and if that is your thing, then I guess you will like this. Unless you are like me, that is—a fan of the aforementioned bands, but of the opinion that this is just too cheesy. Layout is hand done but still lacks thought. (WR)
(Fistolo, PO Box 2836, Upper Darby, PA 19082, www.fistolo.com)

EXPLOITED – "Totally Exploited" 2xLP

Ok ok, it's time to admit my guilty pleasure—I'm a huge EXPLOITED fan. It's taken nearly 20 years to come to terms with it, but I am ready to admit that there is something really appealing about their dumb-as-a-bag-of-hammers punk. Back in the day, every dickhead in the punk scene had their name on their jacket. They were like the RANCID of their day, and as Mike rightly says, its hard to like a band that CRASS told us not to. Here we have a "best of" double (gulp) LP of 27 "classics." Yeah, so some of it is totally shite, but you can't knock "Barmy Army," "Alternative," "Dead Cities," or "Dogs Of War." I'm deeply embarrassed to say that this is great…but there, I said it. (TB)
(Taang, 706 Pismo Ct, San Diego, CA 92109)

FABULOUS DISASTER – "I'm A Mess" CD

I must admit to not being too familiar with FABULOUS Disaster's stuff, but I have seen them play a few times and I remember them having a pretty clean, polished sound that wasn't much to my liking. This EP (recorded at Burnt Ramen) is a step in the right direction—a much more raw, punk rock sound, but with the melodies and harmonies intact. The improvement could have something to do with the addition of Squeaky from GIRLUSH FIGURE on guitar. The only negative is the unfortunate cover of "Got The Time" at the end. (AM)
(Rodent Popsicle, PO Box 1143, Allston, MA 02134, www.rodentpopsicle.com)

THE FLANDERS – "Monster Paw" CD

Rockabilly. They call it punkabilly, but I don't see any punk in here. There are the obligatory cartoon band drawings and songs about killing and evil. Boring. (CK)
(Halb 7, Askanische Str 13, D-06842 Dessau, GERMANY, **halb7@gmx.de**)

THE FORTY FIVES – "Shake/ One After 909"

One of the most boring bands I have ever seen live, and this record isn't doing anything to change my opinion. This is by-the-book garage rock. How many covers of "Shake" do we really need? And a BEATLES cover?! Ugh. Write some songs and throw in some creativity or break up. (CK)
(Chicken Ranch, PO Box 909, Austin, TX 78765, **contact@chickenranchrecords.com**)

FRANTIC – "Attaque" EP

A friend of mine told me I would *love* this record. Turns out he was right. Wow. Not what I expected from THE BLACK LIPS' Die Slaughterhaus imprint, FRANTIC scream their way through a winning blend of house-party hardcore and hooky '77 punk. The snot outweighs the speed here, making them closer to bands like CATHOLIC BOYS than CAREER SUICIDE. That said, fans of either should take note. Easily one of the best singles I've heard all year. (MC)
(www.dieslaughterhausrecords.com)

FROM THE ASHES "Mind Vortex" – CD

Tough, burly, baseball-cap-wearing metal core. This is competent enough, blasting, angry and vicious, but nothing here really grabs me and makes me stand up and pay attention. Really clean production and tight, sort of technical playing. The booklet has lyrics that actually make for a nice read. 23 tracks of blastbeats and low and high screaming vocals all blend together. (RR)
(Acoustic Trauma, PO box 159, 28901 Getafe, Madrid, SPAIN)

FUNERAL SHOCK – LP

While the back cover recalls the design from the WIPERS' first LP, FUNERAL SHOCK is in fact a hard-charging HC outfit stylistically not unlike NEGATIVE FX, albeit with an intelligently rude songwriting style that will have you reading along with the songs, which have subject matter that's more varied than their forebears, covering hippies, the Bush administration's colored alert system, self-help fads, and much more. Not all the songs stick to the ribs, but it's a strong effort. (SS)
(Six Weeks, 225 Lincoln Avenue, Cotati, CA 94931)

GBH – "Cruel & Unusual" CD

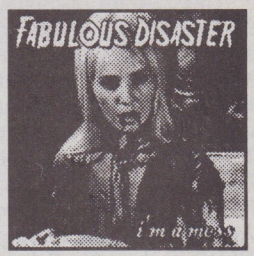
Supposedly a collection of "rare" unreleased gear by these old timers, which roughly translates into a collection of crap live tracks and butchered covers. I love the old GBH records, and grew up with legions of spotty oiks sniffing glue with their logo on their jackets, but this is crapola people. Crapola. The decimation of the LURKERS "I'm On Heat" is unforgivable. (TB)
(Idol, PO Box 720043, Dallas, TX 75372)

GEMISUADI – "Live Like an Animal—Fuck Like an Animal" CD

This Ohio band's CD had the unfortunate fate of being next in my review pile after KILL THE CLIENT (see below) and well, it just can't compare. Actually it's fairly fitting for the review—despite a juvenile commitment to the most inane of song titles (huh huh, dude, I just said "dick" again), this is decent if not above average grind. They've got a heavy sound, competent playing, and pretty mean riffs. But with so many bands out there, and a select few on the order of brilliance of KILL THE CLIENT, do you really need another six-often gore/porno grind band with songs like "Pooped Pants and Crapped Cunts?" You do? OK, well then go for it. (EL)
(Amputated Vein, info@amputatedvein.com)

GONE ALL SUMMER – "Meanwhile Back In The Real World" CD

Decent power-pop-punk that reminds me of the DOUGHBOYS or ALL SYSTEMS GO. Solid catchy



tunes with good vocals and harmonies. It's been done before but these guys do it right. (RL)
(www.goneallsummer.com)

GRAVE DANGER – "Death City" CD

Can you imagine a macho rockabilly band singing about sex and violence? GRAVE DANGER bravely takes on the task. They play short and concise rockabilly tunes with plenty of energy and enthusiasm. Pretty good stuff. (HM)
(Truxton, www.satanrules.com)

GROPERS – CD

I am actually a champion of what many so lazily refer to as "medium-tempo" punk rock, the stuff that both ducks the speed trap and doesn't go in for pysch-fumble. That's where most of the great songs are hiding. Well, here's a band that is way too "medium-tempo" for its own good. Every song chugs along at an unhurried, impersonal pace that screams "opening band." There are good elements here and a great name for the guitarist, but the gruel is a little thin. What would you add for thickening to this...? (RW)
(no address)

THE HANGMEN – "Spring Heeled Jack" EP

In the interests of objective journalism (or maybe I was just picking boogers), I listened to the title song before examining the sleeve or insert and thought it sounded like early 80s Japanese powerpop punk. Turns out it's English psychobillies who wear clown make-up: typical of vaunted rock critic expertise, yes? The three songs on the B-side definitely have a more evident psychhobilly and thrashabilly bent and they're good for what they are, but the HANGMEN certainly titled the disc after the hit. But please, guys, rethink the clown thing; the only good clowns are rodeo clowns. (DD)
(Dislocate, www.dislocate.co.uk)

HATE UNIT - CD

This 21-track disc is a collection of demo tracks plus one seven-inch put out by this short-lived (they existed from mid-2000 until May 2003 and only played 12 shows) Finnish band. The liner notes state that they got together to pay tribute to influences like SSD, JERRY"S KIDS, GANG GREEN, etc. Unfortunately, to my ears, it's pretty generic hardcore with some dopey negative lyrics. Also, I'm not one to be picky, but the song *Old School or No School* contains the line "Floorpunching, windmilling, everything goes"... Isn't that ridiculous style of hardcore "dancing" a fairly modern phenomenon? If you are one of the lucky 500 that got the 7" and it wasn't enough to satisfy your HATE UNIT cravings, pick this up, I guess. (AM)
(Passing Bells, Ritzinkuja 1 d 20, 20380 Turku, FINLAND; passingbells@hotmail.com)

HAUNTED LIFE – "The Dust Has Settled" CD

This is just way too sing-songy and slow for my tastes. I love the fast screamed hardcore parts, and even the rocking guitar parts, but the melodic slow parts just don't do it for me at all. The vocalist has a great screaming voice and should stick with that rather than busting into song. Hey, this is just one reviewer's opinion. (CC)
(Underground Communique, 4807 N. Wolcott Ave. Apt. 2A, Chicago, Illinois)

HAVOC - "Lamento Represso" CD

Packed with energy and aggression, yet undeniably catchy, Italy's HAVOC rip through fifteen tracks of fast, powerful hardcore anchored by a solid, pounding rhythm section. The clean, warm bass tone, and occasionally wiry guitar leads clash with brutally ugly and harsh, yet melodic vocals, making for a great listen. (VH)
(Carlo Barletta, via Vagnone 36, 10144 Torino, ITALY, http://www.havoc.it)

THE HELL YEAHS – CD

This is very commercial sounding garage rock. Slick, over-produced, and utterly soulless. (CK)
(Jump The Gun, no address)

HERO DISHONEST – "Juggernaut" CD

This has been out forever, so we're behind the times. One of the best Scandinavian bands around right now, which is no mean feat considering what ripping shit comes out of that area. No frills, straight-for-the-jugular hardcore that is never to slow things down or throw in some off time breaks—they mix it up way more than most folks in this genre. Hard to pin down, but if you took the piss and vinegar of bands like DEAD NATION or LIMP WRIST, and threw in some of the melody of ENSTAND or even WASTED, you' be heading down the right track. There are 19 extra tracks tacked onto the end which include an OUTLAST cover—yes mate. Check these peeps out on tour this fall! (TB)
(Laja, Caixa Postal 25519, Vila Velha Es, Cep 29102-973, BRAZIL)

HIT ME BACK – "Only the Magic School Bus Goes Back In Time!" EP

Yes! A new one from HIT ME BACK. We love this band in the Bay Area, and they surprised me by actually touring the fuck out of the country in the last year and a half. HIT ME BACK is a great band because they are a group of friends from sixteen to twenty-something years old, and they don't take themselves too seriously. They also rule as a thrashy punk/hardcore band. They are hard to compare to another band, since they vocals are so unique, but if you like punk or hardcore at all, go see this band and pick up a record. This EP is as good as their previous ones, although I wish there wasn't so much pixelation on the cover. Six originals and a HERESY cover. (WR)
(Hate the 80s, 204 Belvedere St, Nazereth, PA 18064, www.hatetheeighties.com)

HONG KONG BLÖNDE – "Splitfinger Fastball" EP

Metallic thrash in that early mid-80's style as popularized by such groups as the ACCUSED, DRI, and BEYOND POSSESSION. Catchy riffs, fast drums, and a raw-throated vocalist keeps this 7" spinning clockwise at the speed that the circle pit churns (45 rpm)—although everyone knows that all pits should rotate in a counter-clockwise fashion (that's right, more rules for you punks to follow!) A solid first effort from this Vancouver, BC quintet. (WM)
(Ugly Pop, www.uglypop.com)

HUMAN BASTARD / DISUNDEAD – "Living Undead" EP

HUMAN BASTARD, who hail from Spain, motor through two songs in close to the typical d-beat style; think thick riffing guitar, gruff vocals, and pit-speed drums. DISUNDEAD also from Spain, ply their dis-trade with more of a rudimentary MOTORHEAD meets d-beat styling. Both bands are decent and fans of the genre won't be dis-appointed. (WM)
(Trabuc, trabucrecords@nodo50.org)

HYPATIA / THE SOUTH – split 12"

An arty package disguising less-than-artful contents. You got herky-jerky noodly modern hardcore, a notch or several above mediocre. "Stop time reading record inserts," the SOUTH command durings one of their quiet moments. I'd take it a step further and recommend removing the stylus from the record altogether. Not really my thing. HYPATIA are a little more entertaining, though their positive hardcore is played in service of humanity and furthering an anti-oppression vegan agenda. Is a 45 RPM 12" technically an EP? (JH)
(Square of Opposition, 2935 Fairview St., Bethlehem, PA 18020)

I ACCUSE! – "That's It!" EP

Fairly predictable but somewhat entertaining early-80s thrash. The back cover features a drawing of a moshing zombie wearing a DRI shirt, which is pretty much all you, need to know. Seriously, there's been a glut of this stuff the last couple of years but this is actually worth checking out. (AM)
(Sound Pollution, PO Box 17742, Covington, KY 41017, www.sound-pollution.com)

THE ILLNESSES – "I Wanna Die" EP

I wish I knew for sure if this was the same THE ILLNESSES that played in SF back in 1997. This was recorded the same year, so I am going to assume it is. Wow, I remember

liking them, but were they this good? Poppy yet trashy punk with very catchy songs and a high-pitched, though vocally appealing singer. If these guys aren't still together they better reform. There are a slew of bands today playing that everyone seems to think are really great that play this same type of music, but the ILLNESSES are better. Definitely ahead of their time. (CK)
(Pop Quiz, 2005 Saber Ct, League City, TX 75573)

IN NAME AND BLOOD – "Blinding Lights" LP

My favorite thing about this album is that their thank you list includes "all the ladies in our lives". Ha. I love it! This is one of those records that you really don't need to listen to in order to review. The artwork, which features an extremely nice hand screened sleeve and pink colored vinyl, couldn't give a high school dropout a clearer idea of what they're in for. *s-c-r-e-a-m-oooh*! It *is* much more straightforward and angry than I expected, as they refrain from emo clichés like sappy vocal melodies and instrumental indie rock breakdowns. These eight songs may be calculated, but they far from lack intensity and rage. My only real complaint is that the galloping guitar and tacky leads can't shake the IRON MAIDEN feel. Please, leave the metal bullshit in grade school. Hand screened, limited to 279, and printed on recycled paper! (VH)
(no address)

INSTITUTE - "The Piano Player"CD

There must be mercury in the water in Georgia- this is completely bizarre apocalyptic dirge-core from Savannah. Their name should be Institution—this sounds like the result of Bedlam's house band jamming with the guy who cut off his own knob and wrote half the entries in the Oxford English dictionary. Their last record featured Victoria from DAMAD and KARST on vocals and the similarities to those two bands along with UNPERSONS is starting to establish that area of the country as home to a unique sound—dark, tortured, brooding and increasingly varied and experimental. These guys forgo the lengthy repetition of obvious inspiration NEUROSIS and instead incorporate a dizzying array of tempo changes, electronics, samples, and effects all of which combine to achieve a completely overwhelming listening experience. Highly recommended nightmarish, original stuff, this really needs to be heard to be believed. (EL)
(Yellow Dog, PO Box 550208, 10372 Berlin, GERMANY, www.yellowdog.de)

THE INSURGENT - "It Will Be That Sound" CD

Possibly posthumous compilation of this Long Island band's material. Youthful, energetic, inspired and naive, this goes along nicely with OPERATION CLIFF CLAVIN, THIS BIKE IS A PIPE BOMB, STUN GUNS and all the other CRIMPSHRINE influenced bands. At their best moments they sound close to DILLINGER 4 or AGAINST ME! (AD)
(Innocent When You Dream, PO Box 20897, Oakland, CA 94620)

THE INTELLECTUALS / ROCK'N'ROLL ADVENTURE KIDS – split EP

A primal pairing if there ever was one, not to mention a welcome vinyl return for these greats. The INTELLECTUALS are a two-piece combo that is more keen on the punk than the blues, which is a welcome change of pace. RNRAK check in with what has to be their finest outing yet, busting at the seems with countrified spazz garage-punk. A fine split! (MC)
(Vida Loca, Casella Postale 17033 00189, Roma Grottarossa, ITALY)

INTELLIGENCE – "Terror & Boredom" LP & bonus CD

Vinyl version of a CD that came out some time ago, mucho welcome in that I got to listen to this great record again. If anyone out there has listened to the RESIDENTS in the last ten years, remember when they were into writing weird off-kilter actual art-punk songs around 1980 or so? Without consciously aping their style, this band hits the same parts of the 'ol lobes. Off-putting modern sounds. There is a bonus CD of extra songs thrown in for good measure that is simply more of the same. This band's creativity is so obvious it's like being in room with a couple of avant-genius ten year olds, kinda creepy but fascinating. Anyone who digs A FRAMES or MOTO will enjoy slowing down to this. (RW)
(Narnack)

THE INTRODUCERS – "Close Ups" LP

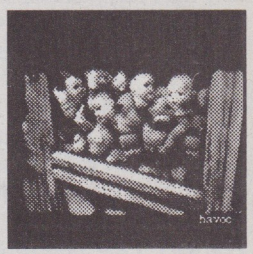
Surf and surfish instros with enough grit and overdrive to get them past the *MRR* editorial board. In other words, it does not sound like a Taco bell commercial. Nope, it's lots of hard-pumping rhythms with tensely coiled guitar of doom on top. Good tunes to boot, plus a few vocals to break things up. Best of all, there's a version of the theme from "They call Me Trinity," but these Eye-talian lads better do the vocals when they tour here. This could give surf music a good name again. (DD)
(Slovenly, PO Box 204, Reno, NV 89504, www.slovenly.com)

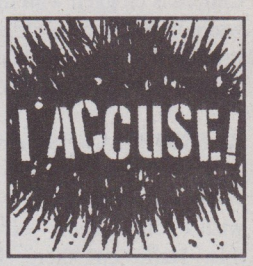
I OBJECT / FOREVER YOUTH – split EP

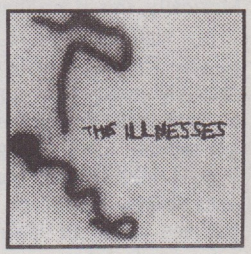
This thrashy, upstate New York hardcore is self-referential to the max. You know, door price politics. I OBJECT says, "We are a bunch of youthful DIY punks (sic) kids who support the scene all the time." Posi, best-friends-till-death-core. It's a little mix-matched and sloppy, in a charming way. FOREVER YOUTH has a pretty classic youth crew sound, with vocals that are growly, not clean. They're not only pro-unity, but pro-love and sex, which is cool. The packaging could have used a little more love and sex, but the recording is aces on both sides. (AC)
(209 Center St, Olean, NY 14760, anusfire666@hotmail.com, pizzarollking@yahpp.com)

THE JET SET – "We've Got the Dance Connection" CD

I just missed seeing these guys when I was last in Peoria, drat the luck. Take some straightforward garage punk, a little folk rock moodiness, some rock 'n' soul and that's about what the Jet Set offer. Uh, the point at which the OKMONIKS and the REIGNING SOUND and something vaguely arty and goofy thing intersect? Big points for song titles such as "I Sold My Soul to Pay the Rent" and "Girl, I Don't Dig Your Philosophy." (DD)
(Upright, PO Box 60553, Chicago, IL 60660-0653, www.uprightrecordings.com)







JOY DIVISION - "Lost Control" LP

Live recording of a show in March 1979 at...where was it? CBGBs? The Roxy? On Broadway? The Masque? 100 Club? Oh, that's right, it was the Bowden Vale Youth Club in Altringham. This recording was also previously released as the *Death LP* and the imaginatively titled *Live Bowden Vale Youth Club Altringham LP* and (I think) was filmed for a documentary on the band. The title is derived of course from their song "She's Lost Control" written by Ian Curtis about the fits and seizures which plagued his short life, a result of the epilepsy with which he was diagnosed two months before this gig. This was really the brink for JOY DIVISION; they were on the cover of the NME in January, their John Peel session was broadcast in February, they supported THE CURE in London earlier this month, and the following month they would record *Unknown Pleasures.* So you could say that this record captures them at a historical point, the set list is a mix of new and old tracks and heavily features the soon to be new debut album. I have quite a few live recordings of JOY DIVISION and listening to this one I can't help but think how (especially given the chaotic times) remarkably tight they were on stage, they sound just like the studio recordings. The high point of the record is the opening moments of "Disorder" (which features a little extra electronic twiddling), which never fails to make the hairs on my arms, stand straight. I doubt if any of you are going to actively seek out this record, even though it's brilliant, a better idea would probably be to get the legit *Preston 28 February 1980* or *Les Bains Douches* live albums, which should still be available. (AD)
(no address)

KAKISTOCRACY – LP

Moving anarcho-punk from Ashville with very impressive musicianship. Interesting, poetic lyrical content about Emma Goldman, capitalism, and the military, as well as other pressing political topics. "The voice of the Church is clogged with the phlegm of caution while its hands clasp its rosaries, crosses, and itself to its bosom." Whoa. (SR)
(ruledbyfools@yahoo.com)

KASSIOPEIA – "Szenebrummkreisel" EP

The first thing that jumps out is the vocals—they're throaty, scratchy, and low—I wish I could get my voice anywhere close to this. Hello out there, DISTILLERS fans. Musically, this is up my alley too, with that richly textured, wistful mid-tempo German sound—DUESENJAEGER comes to mind. I can't comment on the lyrics, since they "didn't have time" to translate them into English, but some of them have got to be about feelings. (I think German punks may be the only ones besides Americans who don't bother to put the name of their country on their records.) Really nice songs—if I still had a top ten, this would be on there. (AC)
(Behind the Scenes, Liebigstr. 16, 10247 Berlin, GERMANY, info_kassiopeia@yahoo.de)

KEEP IT UP - "Check Yourself" EP

KEEP IT UP plays basic, fast, straight edge hardcore. Overall, despite some of the modern influences (in songs like "Check Yourself" and "The Alarm"), the music is pretty good and I dig the singer's voice. I just wish the vocalist could have spent less time using the word "fucking" and more time on the lyrical content. Most of the songs read like they were written minutes before they were recorded. I like a good song about being stabbed in the back as much as the next straight edge kid, but at least try to put a new spin on the topic. "I'm always well aware when people like you stab me in the fucking back. Fuck all of you." Not bad for a debut, but it's lacking something to push it over the edge. (CC)
(www.feelin-it.com)

KILL THE CLIENT – "Wage Slave" CDEP

I'm just going to go on record right now as saying this is without a doubt THE BEST GRIND RECORD OF THE YEAR, maybe the last couple years. Every time I listen to this I can't keep from jumping around and screaming like a maniac, which even made the guys on the 14 Mission bus uncomfortable. This Texas band is absolute technical grind perfection, like a mix of BRUTAL TRUTH and CRYPTOPSY—the singer, in fact, is a dead ringer for Kevin Sharp. It makes sense that the guitarist of KALIBAS was playing with these guys for a while—there's no song on here longer than one hundred seconds yet there are more riffs and tempo changes than would be found on some bands' entire discographies. And don't even get me started on the drummer. Holy Christ—I'll just say that on a couple occasions the blast beat is the slow part of the song. Plus the lyrical topics are radically political, intelligent and original, e.g. songs about the Russian mafia, food dyes and JFK—no simplistic "fuck the system" parroting. But it's not just the technicality—the songs still manage to have memorable, catchy parts and the whole 14 minutes' worth is brimming with such non-stop intensity you can't help but be impressed no matter what you think of grind. If you only buy one heavy release of the year, you can't do much better than this. Get this now! (EL)
(Counter Intelligence, KEVINcounterHQ@aol.com)

KIRKENDAHL VOID – "Graveyard A-GO-GO" CD

This trio plays a variety of rock styles with an emphasis on sex themes and eerie sounds. The non-stop trailer park jokes and demeaning comments towards women, men, and sexuality ruin the well-executed tunes and flawless musicianship on this CD. The jokes run real thin by the middle of the CD. Perfect for jerk-assed perverted little boys. (HM)
(Kitty Kat, www.KirkendahlVoyd.com)

THE KODIAKS – "Cherry Blossom, Evil, and Alcohol" EP

This here is the second release by these Austin fools, and it's an astronomical improvement over their debut. The KODIAKS immediately remind me of the lost sound of Estrus: equal parts TIM KERR Texas screech and Japanese implosion a la GASOLINE. Lotsa sweat here. Keep fluids close by. (MC)
(Super Secret, PO Box 1585, Austin, TX 78767)

LAW OF ALL ENDS – "Forty Bones and Six Flights of Stairs Later" EP

Yawn. Definitely not something to be listened to while operating heavy machinery, this is meandering, slow, discordant screamo from Iowa with dual vocalist screaming constantly that reminded me of A DEATH BETWEEN SEASONS or a far less interesting URANUS. The twin vocal thing strikes me as being utterly pointless and creates a monotonous, soporific wash over the music that was putting me right to bed. Sorry, I just wasn't into this. (EL)
(Law of All Ends, 1127 Franklin St., Iowa City, IA 52240, www.lawofallends.com)

LEFTOVER CRACK- "Fuck World Trade" LP

While I'm guessing most people who like LEFTOVER CRACK already know what they sound like, I am compelled to let our readers know just what kind of music they will be spending their allowances on if they pick up the new album *Fuck World Trade*. They sound somewhere along the lines of really pop-oriented punk ala Fat Wreck Chords, complete with ska breakdowns. That said, they start off with a stab at RANCID for supporting the businessmen who profit from punk, though it seems that in the not so distant past they were on Hellcat Records, which if I'm not mistaken, is run by Tim Armstrong. Maybe it has something to do with the label switch? I guess this may be good for kids who are into this sound, seeing as how the lyrics are very overtly political, desperate, and talk current events very explicitly, except for the drinkin' songs. I like "Super Tuesdays" lyrics, such as "I pledge allegiance to no flag," because all borders are prisons, kiddies. LEFTOVER CRACK have a stance, which is more than I can say for most people these days. One would hope it is not wasted on the shock value of their Photoshopped cover and pixilated insert poster. (WK)
(Alternative Tentacles, PO Box 419092, San Francisco, CA 94141-9092)

TH' LOSIN STREAKS – "Sounds Of Violence" LP

...GREAT FUCKING GUITAR SOUND on this puppy!!!!!!! Twin guitar gang bang!!!!! VERY impressive!!!!! Let us all get ready to taste the spunk from the tips of this Sacramento foursome...because they're about to pop!!!! Half the TROUBLEMAKERS are in this new stew... of piss and turds!!!! Fans of 60s music take note...THIS IS A SMOKER!!!! Maybe even a DICK SMOKER!!!! First class production... not too low and not too high... right smack in the warm middle!!!! And the playing ability of these boys is right up to standard...especially those fucking guitars!!!!! What a perfect TONE!!!! (SW)

(Slovenly, PO Box 204, Reno, NV 89504, www.slovenly.com)

LOVE EQUALS DEATH – "Four Notes On A Dying Scale" CD

This combo features Chon of LOOSE CHANGE fame. So these guys sound how AFI used to sound pre-Jade era on the first two AFI LPs or so. But there is also a Youth/Crew feel a la REDEMPTION 87. This whole AFI success attention-grabbing thing is getting way too incestuous. In spite of this, this is really good. Driving punk/hardcore. (RL)

(Popsmear, www.loveequalsdeath.com)

LOWER CLASS BRATS - "Worst / Walking into the Fire"

These BRATS recall elements of '82 British street-punk, even though they hail from Austin, Texas. Never mind that the record was pressed in France; while the lyrics plumb through the thematic territory they've been doing for years, they've not lost a beat with their gruff vocals and simple production. Familiar, but it has that kind of charm you expect from this genre. Cool green-flared, vinyl. (SS)

(Dirty Punk, BP 302, 59666 Villeneive d'Ascq Cedex, FRANCE)

THE LUCKY PUNCH – "Kick Up A Hullabaloo" LP

...oh my god...WHO SHIT ON THE TURNTABLE????? Just what this world needs... more hard and heavy Euro rock bands with cocks up their asses!!!! These Teutonic riff hounds might look good to you gals, but trust me... they're eating the first layer off of my unwashed asshole THIS VERY MINUTE!!!! (SW)

(Dead Beat, PO Box 283, Los Angeles, CA 90078, www.dead-beat-records.com)

MAD MACHINE – "First Damage" EP

Heavy, heavy mid-late BLACK FLAG influence here, but MAD MACHINE are definitely lifting elements from the FLAG stylebook and forging their own path, rather than just aping their favorite band. And let's face it, if some Japanese kids *did* decide to start a band just to ape BLACK FLAG, it would probably be fucking amazing. As it is this three song seven inch just leaves me wanting to hear more. Excellent stuff. (AM)

(LSS, #503-2-26-18 Ohhara, Setagaya-Ku, Tokyo, JAPAN)

MANGINA – "At War With Black Metal" EP

Fuck yeah. MANGINA nails it on the head with the title "At War With Black Metal." Is there a more admirable cause?! This record is hilarious. A song like "Sorry About Da Mess" has been needing to happen for a long time: "Burning churches, eating brains, the black metal scene is so fucking lame...Wipe off your corpse paint and step up bitch, we'll cut you down and leave you in a Scandinavian ditch!" The artwork is totally out of control. At least a dozen penises on the cover! There is no way not to and laugh your ass off at this. Anyone who claims to be involved with punk and hardcore and listens to black metal needs to die. Got a problem? Well, you can cut off my head with your battle-axe but it's the truth! (VH)

(Jeth Row, 4739 Magazine, New Orleans, Louisiana 70115)

MERCS – "Songs in the Key of Fun" EP

This is a hard one to pinpoint. MERCS has an "emotive hardcore" feel but it's not fast hardcore; it's really mid-tempo with a lot of points where it sounds kind of goofy. At times they remind me of FORMER MEMBERS OF ALFONSIN, but not necessarily in a good way. This MERCS record doesn't suck, but it fails to impress. I also think this record has the quality of demo (recording-wise and how well they play), so it doesn't really cut it on a 7". There are some funny lyrics, but not enough to warrant a record, I don't think. Oh, and the layout has way too much evidence of a computer for me to approve. Sorry. (WR)

(Square of Opposition, 2935 Fairview St, Bethlehem, PA 18020)

MEXICAN CHEERLEADER – "Kings And Kings' Hoots" CD

For all the press releases that claim a band sounds like WEEZER (for instant commercial potential I suppose) these guys actually sound like WEEZER with a punk edge. Midtempo with a heavy riff thing. I thought I would be more into this but it got generic real quick. (RL)

(Underground Communique, www.undercomm.org)

MIHOEN! / SICK TERROR – split EP

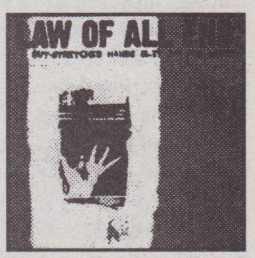
Brazil's SICK TERROR thrash, punk, and grind it up through five snarling numbers. Pretty fierce, angry stuff here. Nothing all that ground-breaking but good, solid, fast-paced shit, with blastbeat drums and buzz-saw guitars. Sung in Spanish with English translations. MIHOEN! who are Dutch, have a similar approach, though they have a slightly more melodic attack. Four quick-paced ditties with a more anthemic feel than SICK TERROR. Songs are sung in Dutch and English. "Bush Bush" has the nice beginning lines, "shitass Bush, your head's so big, but I'm sure there's no brain in it." These bands are probably amazing live. (RR)

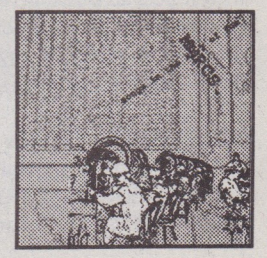
(UPS, c/o Mos, Vliegtuiglaan 3, 3769 JM Soesterberg, NETHERLANDS)

MIKA MIKO – "Forensic Scientist" EP

The girls are screamin', the organ is boopin', the songs are garagey, the effect is canny. Ten years ago this would've been "riot grrl," now it's "nuevo-new-wave." S'okay, but the songs don't make me want to tear down any Warfield posters. (RW)

(Post Present Medium, PO Box 291301, LA, CA 90029)





MONOSHOCK – "Runnin' Ape-Like From the Backwards Superman" CD

If a 90s band ever deserved a rash of post-demise name check action then these psych-punk standard bearers are those guys. This is a singles 'n unreleased comp of this mighty California power trio (with occasional super-sizing via sax/organ/insanity) who put out a scattering of great singles and a sprawling double LP on the Blackjack Records label, then folded. The first thing that strikes is that leaping out of the murky pummel is someone reciting/yelping actual lyrics, which you can't really pick up from listening to the incredibly dim original vinyl pressings. Songs such as "Primitive Zippo," "Soledad" and "Folgers" pretty much define heavy modern psych-punk, in that a band can get weird without disappearing into a self-indulgent jam band haze. MONOSHOCK are usually described as "CRIME meets HAWKWIND," but that only gets the guitar sound, which is pure rock-n-roll run through the confusion generator. Anyone who felt burned in the early 90s by the violent u-turn in quality that Amphetamine Reptile was charting, well, these were the guys carrying forward the promise of the HALO OF FLIES/MUD-HONEY fuzz-punk revolution. It's never too late... (RW)
(S-S, 1114 21st St, Sacramento, CA 95814)

MORTICIA'S LOVERS – "Smash The Radio" LP

I want to call a moratorium on this type of record cover. The "new wave" looking cover with Day-Glo colors—yellow, pink, green, etc.—with pictures of the sunglassed band that are supposed to look cut and paste, but everyone can tell the layout has been done on a computer. I can't bring myself to buy a record that looks like this. Please make this the last one. Of course, this immediately taints my view of the music. It isn't bad, but it's not great either. Poppy and slick rock'n'roll. I like a bit more trash on my turntable. (CK)
(Demolition Derby, PB 4005, 2800 Mechelen 4, BELGIUM, morticiaslovers@hotmail.com)

MYRA LEE – CD

Twitchy emo from France. Thanks to some stellar work by our own skinny emo kids (SHIVERING, CALVARY, etc.) I have had more time lately for this genre. When it rocks its great, almost DRIVE LIKE JEHU with some RITES OF SPRING bits. Unfortunately, when it gets all screamo and they shout away from the mike, it's nails down a chalkboard. A game of two halves I'd say. (TB)
(lamchoire@hotmail.com)

NEIGHBORS – "Mobile Homes" EP

Rockin' stuff that reminds me of college rock circa 1986; the THREE O'CLOCK and THE LONG RYDERS come to mind. Poppy hooks, 60s keyboards and guitar. Not necessarily for punk rockers, but a fun release anyways. (RL)
(www.theneighbors.net)

THE NERDS "Lords of Dregs and Crap" CD

This is a collection of seven inch, comp and LP tracks from these Italian clowns. This chronicles the bands transformation and hardship (according to the guitarist Monkey Motherfucker) from a wannabe ANGRY SAMOANS cover band to a poor mans ANTI-SEEN cover band. Not an original idea to be found on the 24 tracks herein. The Klansmens hoods, paper bag masks, rebel flags, choice of covers, and photo shoots at Pit's have all been done to death. There is an occasional good track among some of the earlier material, usually an early QUEERS-like track or an ANGRY SAMOANS cover. But they don't really save this thing. The liner notes make me want to puke and remind me why I am not in a band. Monkey's whining about being misunderstood by their former more "traditional punk" leaning fans is tear jerking, really. Maybe the charm and novelty of Italian versions of American punk classics wore thin and your 'rabid' fans don't like shitty shock shlock bar rock? (RR)
(Laja, Caixa Postal 25519, Vila Velha-Es/ 29102-973, BRAZIL)

NOMATRIX - "Induce Vomiting" CD

Seventeen tracks of pretty basic, lo-fi(ish), energetic punk. Reminds me a lot of early SCREECHING WEASEL (first record), or the ANGRY SAMOANS. Er...except that those bands had catchy tunes, and were, uh...really good. And these guys don't really have great tunes, and aren't that good. But the spirit is there. Sort of. (RK)
(Dead Lamb, www.deadlambrecords.com)

NOPAIN – "Black Jack" CD

A ferocious onslaught of grit and fury from Japanese rock n roll maniacs NOPAIN, bringing together the manic energy of TEEN-GENERATE with the intensity of GAUZE. Fast and loud, these five blazing tracks are packed with blasts of raw, fuzzed out guitar, and explosive vocals. Distributed by Sound Pollution in the US and Agipunk in Europe, so don't let this one slip by you... (VH)
(MCR, 157 Kamiagu Maizuru Kyoto, 624-0913, JAPAN, www.dance.ne.jp/~mcr)

NOSFERATUS SUBWORLD / ULTIMO PRESO – split EP

A split of dark angry hardcore with both bands singing in Spanish. NOSFERATUS SUBWORLD sound like a Spanish TRAGEDY with semi-melodic guitars over angsty vocals. They're competent enough and fans of the style will like it but I didn't hear anything too mind blowing. ULTIMO PRESO on the other hand, kicked my ass all over the place with some vicious hardcore/grind. All the ferocity and catchiness missing from the other side of the record has apparently been usurped and doubled by these guys cuz this is great super-pissed stuff. They definitely make it worth checking out this record. (EL)
(Bricks, lapatadeldbeat@hotmail.com)

NOTHING SPECIAL – "Punker Mike and Poser Joe Learn to Hate the System" CD

Sounds like NOFX meets early GREEN DAY meets REEL BIG FISH, in the worst possible way. I'm convinced they just wanted to rhyme the lyrics and didn't even think about if they made sense. It's cool that they did a song about George Bush, even if the song sucks. (WR)
(Flipout, no address)

THE OAOT'S – "Typical" CD

Good punky power-pop that reminds me of The PLIMSOULS and the early REPLACEMENTS. Think mid-80s college rock and roll. A bit dated, but still an energetic guitar sound. (RL)
(Sounds Like Vinyl, www.theoaots.com)

DAS OATH – LP

It's not too late to climb aboard DAS OATH zeppelin. Thick, well produced, rock-tinged hardcore from this "controversial" US/Dutch übergroup. Go get this record and let them show you how it's done. Don't strain your eyes trying to read the white-ink-on-white-paper lyric sheet though. It's on Dim Mak, so they had to make it arty, right? (AM)
(Dim Mak, PO Box 348, Hollywood, CA 90078, www.dimmak.com)

THE OBSERVERS – " So What's Left Now" LP

I'm sure everyone who's heard this LP has a completely different interpretation of who and what they sound like, but I guarantee you that we all agree on one thing: what we have here is something very special. To say that I believe that this is one off the best punk records ever to be recorded is not over stepping the mark. Any band that can inject the sharp poke-in-the-eye brashness of WIRE, the driving melody-with-a-twist of THE ADVERTS, the heavy atmosphere of THE FITS, (to lesser extent) THE FALSE PROPHETS, and even add some of the brooding twang of THE WIPERS, while still sounding original deserves every friggen accolade you can throw at them. If you went completely gaga over NO HOPE FOR THE KIDS, then this will tickle you absolutely silly. Album of the year. Unless a certain band from Denmark make the deadline, I can't see anything knocking this off. I send my love to Portland for yet another punk rock treasure. (SD)
(Vinyl Warning, PO Box 2991, Portland, OR 97208, www.vinylwarning.com)

OLHO DE GATO / LOMB – split EP

A noisy split of Dutch thrash is what you get here. OLHO DE GATO is my easy favorite—their side is completely insane, messy, energetic blasting hardcore with incredibly pissed vocals. Sheer musical chaos this is. LOMB are comparatively tame, though they're still very fast in a more straight-forward thrash style—SEEIN' RED came to mind. Their lyrics have a heavy, politically-oriented agenda and they also do a BGK cover. Not really my thing, but still not bad, and definitely a good record for OLHO DE GATO alone. (EL)
(Underground Punk Support, c/o Mos, Vliegtuiglaan 3, 3769 JM Soesterberg, NETHERLANDS, r.ups@wanadoo.nl)

THE ORDER OF THE FLY – "A Pox On All The Pretties" EP

Excellent skeleton monsters adorn the packaging of this EP. Musically, these guys sound the way they look. Their metal-tinged hardcore or as they put it "horror punk" fits their goth/death/skull/monster make-up. I dig this EP more each time I listen to it. Soon, I'll be off to check out the comic books they recommend! (HM)
(Mad Science, PO Box 2122 San Bernardino, CA 92406, www.theorderofhtefly.com)

OUR TURN - "Catch Your Breath" EP

The second installment from our own in-house narrator of the intrepid tales of the straight and sober. Harking back to the glory days of '88 youth crew before that damned Victory records moved in and spoiled everything No macho metal riffs, no oversized extreme sportswear, no beat-down lyrics, just four blistering hardcore punk tunes, bubbling over with energy of a non-alcoholic varity. Classic lyrics, dealing with the old school topics off brotherhood, cleaning up your damn room, and most importantly, staying positive. Generic? Hell yes, but in the most beautiful way, 'cause to be frank, I dearly miss CHAIN OF STRENGH, MAJORITY OF ONE, BOLD and YOUTH OF TODAY. Along with POINTING FINGER and FIRST STEP, OUR TURN has rekindled a flame that should have never gone out. They may be straight, but Christ do they rock, and yes, they're fuckin' punk. (SD)
(Youngblood, PO Box 236, Ephrata, PA 17522, youngblood-records.com)

OUT OF REACH - "Neverending" CD

Positive (I guess you would call it) post-hardcore from Italy. Melodic and solid with lyrics in English...this isn't bad, just a little tame. (AD)
(Goodwill, CP 15319, 60143 Roma Laurentino, ITALY)

PARTY OF ANARCHY – "Mental Hospitals" CD

Ahh, bless our Russian chums. Kinda mediocre RANCID-lite, streetpunk, which seems to be the order of the day from those parts these days. Totally passable until they inject some horrendous ska parts—yikes. Didn't these folks get the memo? I thought ska parts were illegal now? Ouch. (TB)
(Neuroempire, Shemetova TN, PO Box 58, 123100, Moscow, RUSSIA)

PEKATRALATAK / TEKKEN – split 7"

A thick slab'o wax, indeed. This record is thicker than a slice of pizza (sorry, it's lunchtime and I'm hungry), and it's a picture disc to boot. For the most part, PEKATRALATAK play upbeat, UK82-inspired punk rock with dual vocals, though there is an inexplicable (and totally awful) cookie-monster-vocalled death metal/grind song halfway through their side. The TEKKEN side starts off really promisingly with some lots of distortion and raging vocals, but when they go from mid-tempo to fast, they totally lose me. Too many incongruous blast beats for one record. (GN)
(Vendetta, 9 Rue Champs, Elysees 31500, Toulouse, FRANCE, vendetta@vendetta.propagande.org)

PISSED JEANS – "Throbbing Organ / Night Minutes"

Deep-seated rock'n'roll with a brain-damaged, metal-plated sound. The PISSED JEANS have bad thoughts in their heads and nothing but evil deeds in mind. If you've ever heard San Francisco's CONDEMNED TO DEATH, then that comparison might come to mind...it's mangled music with ugly thought-cancer lyrics and mangly guitars. I dig the PISSED JEANS, whoever they might be. (JH)
(Parts Unknown, PO Box 4835, Toms River, NJ 08754

PISTOL GRIP – "Berlin" EP

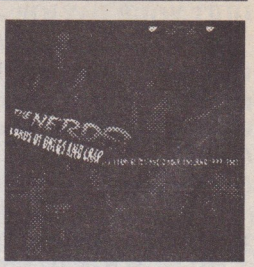
This high-energy street punk is probably a focus in Bruce Roehrs' column. This picture disc is a tease for their third LP and is limited to 500 copies. It features a new tune and live versions of two previously released tunes. Good shit. (HM)
(Lotus LTD, PO Box 1668, Hollywood, CA 90078, www.pistolgrip.net, www.lotuslimited.com)

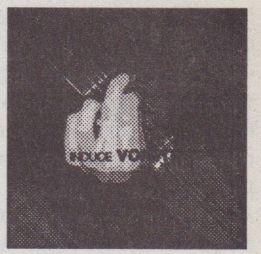
PLANES MISTAKEN FOR STARS – "Up In Them Guts" LP

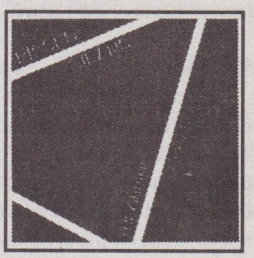
I must admit I haven't been following PLANES MISTAKEN FOR STARS' trajectory very closely. I might have been put off by their obvious nominal handicap—I imagined them to be on the wimpy emo side of things, although if you'd told me they were HEROIN-style screamo I wouldn't have been too surprised either. I must admit I was surprised by what I heard when I put this on. There are elements of metal, hardcore, prog, and even folk on here. The prevailing sound is brooding, metallic hardcore with gravel-throated vocals and kinetic guitar work, but I have to tip my hat to these guys for taking risks and experimenting with different ideas on this album. It doesn't always pay off, but it makes for a varied, interesting listen. (AM)
(No Idea, PO Box 14636, Gainesville, FL 32604, www.noidearecords.com)

POLITICAL ASYLUM – "Winter" CD

This Scottish band circa 1982 featured AK Press mogul Ramsey on vocals. This includes their first EP and three tapes with no LP stuff to the best of my investigation. Great political stuff with little production and jangly/reverb guitar. On the post-punk side of punk for back then, and at times a little UK indie (C-86?). A good collection and find the LP while you're at it. (RL)
(Passing Bells, Ritzinkuja 1d20, 20380, turku, FINLAND, passingbells@hotmail.com)







QUIT YOUR DAYJOB – CDEP

Goofy, synthy, hyperactive...actually this is the 2004 version of THOMAS DOLBY, except the songs all clock in under two minutes. Can you fucking handle that shit? I can't. (RW)
(www.imadethis.se)

RAT BASTARDS – "R.D.A." EP

Chicago's RAT BASTARDS have been at it for a while now, and after a series of EPs in the 90s they seem to have developed a heavier, sharper sound. Aiming right for the throat with some straightforward hardcore, they play memorable songs that range in topics from racism, to the poisoning of the earth and our food supply, to being an under-played wage slave. This recording is solid, which makes it a step above a lot of the more straightforward hardcore these days. I do think I hear a slight Scandinavian influence, though more in the production than the songs. It seems with all the work that went into making this record that the packaging would be a lot better, I really hate to see these pixilated record sleeves that look like someone downloaded a jpeg off a website and blew it up. What is up with all the Kangaroo releases having the label logo on both sides of the record? How am I supposed to tell which side is which when I want to throw on my favorite song at a party? (WK)
(Kangaroo, Middenweg 13, 1098 AA Amsterdam, NETHERLANDS)

THE REBEL SPELL - "Expression In Laymen's Terms" CD

Canadian punker band that have a neat inversion of the typical punk male/female gender roles. Women are on drums and guitar, and the chaps handle vocals and bass. Regardless they kick out some driving street-punkesque tunes. Basic stuff, but played with an sense of gusto and energy that would suggest they are more than going through the motions. Think REDUCERS SF with a decent line in political anthems (no songs about drinking, or fighting, or hanging with the lads). Great packaging too. (RK)
(www.therebelspell.com)

THE REGULARS – "Vegas" CD

Dutch neo-rockabilly by a bunch of crusty looking old-timers, so more power to them. This certainly doesn't excite me to the point of delirium, but if I stumbled into a Dutch bar, I'd be glad to find a band this good playing, not to mention the always-good novelty factor of fake American accents. (DD)
(Rebellion, Mgr Van Roosmalenplein 24, 5213 GD's, Hertogenbosch, THE NETHERLANDS)

RENEGADES / FAF – split EP

A split of two junior high school bands (if the note inside the record is to be believed) circa 1998, whose members later became the BLACK LIPS. The band is actually titled FA followed by an backwards F, but I can't type backwards on this computing machine, so they are FA7 from here on out. The FA7 tracks are pissed and snotty old-school sounding punk hardcore with great shitty production. Songs about stealing shit, making fun of cripples, masturbating twice a day, and generally fucking shit up. "No Rules" and "Fuck You" rule. "Fucking Cripple" is the feel good hit of the month. JFA and HATED YOUTH come to mind. I love it. The RENEGADES on the flip don't really do it for me. Plenty of attitude but not much else. Pretty amateurish mid-paced punk, the kind you would expect from a bunch of junior high punk kids I guess. Probably of interest only to those involved, friends and the like. Still, a fine record 'cause the FA7 side is so great. Mine has no cover. (RR)
(www.dieslaughterhouserecords.com)

REHASHER – "Off Key Melodies" CD

These guys crank out some speedy melodic hardcore a la PROPAGHANDI and uptempo NOFX.The vocals have a bit more melody than the mentioned bands. On second thought I'm totally into this. Blazing guitars and great melodies, and yes, as the title states they are a bit off key on occasion. Great stuff! (RL)
(No Idea, PO Box 14636, Gainsville, FL 32604, rehasher.com)

THE RESCUE – "Phone Numbers" CDEP

"Remember when 'I love you' actually meant something? Avoid me unless you're in the mood for a suicide." Excuse me? No tact. This is horrible. Verses sound something like CONVERGE, but much more simplistic. The choruses come in and it's all AT THE DRIVE IN or worse...much, much worse. This sounds like fucking NSYNC. I doubt if these guys ever listened to a punk band. These guys will be on my cereal box come February, or at least playing out of my housemate's room. Fucking terrible. (WR)
(United Edge)

RESIDUALS / NUCLEAR ADDICTS – split EP

Punk rock from the state Bush calls home. RESIDUALS are speedy, bare-bones hardcore reminiscent of inspired young bands I used to see in school. The first song takes on the reshaping of Islam and the other argues that society just doesn't understand punks. NUCLEAR ADDICTS are super noisy, fast, and crusty—complete with the drunken sloshy vocals. When they put down the liquor, these boys sing about Bush, friendship, and the government. This is okay, but probably super exciting for the scene in their hometown. (SR)
(Life of Strife, PO Box 18382, Dallas, TX 75218, rippinginside@hotmail.com, plasma05@aol.com)

ROSA – "Texarkana-Get-A-High Five" EP

This acoustic, folksy band has a lean sound dominated by banjo and guitar with spirited dual vocal harmonies. At times they remind me of the slower THIS BIKE IS A PIPE BOMB tunes. They include a twelve-page booklet full of their lyrics, confessions and ideas. The best part is that this guy started a label with his mom. (HM)
(Open Kitchen, 4134 Wynona, Houston, TX 77087 www.geocities.com/rosapunx)

SATAN'S TEARDROPS / LEGENDARY HUCKLEBUCKS - split CD

I was happily surprised to hear great rockabilly after looking at the lame cover! Who would of known? New Hampshire's SATAN'S TEARDROPS plays fuckin' excellent, straight-up rockabilly with a really nice twang. Their "Shame on Me" cover is great! Pittsburgh's LEGENDARY HUCKLEBUCKS plays decent, upbeat punkabilly, but didn't impress with the vocal effects. (SR)
(Rock n Roll Purgatory, PO Box 771153, Lakewood, OH
44107, www.rocknrollpurgatory.com)

SAVAGE LUCY – "Forget This Generation" LP

Those of you who think that THE DISKORDS are the only West Coast teen-punk hope obviously haven't heard SAVAGE LUCY, the tough-girl gum-smackers from Ellensburg, WA. Having just totally flipped over their single, I'm sad to report that this debut is a little bit of a letdown. With a sound somewhere in between '77 punk and grrrl roar reminiscent of THE PERIOD PAINS or RAOOUL, the tunes on this album lack the bite and charm necessary to make this stuff work. With tunes like "I Don't Wanna Be A Teenager No More" and "Pep Rally Gone Wrong," the fun factor is still in tact. It's just not enough to get me going. (MC)
(Squirrel, PO Box 481, Leeds, LS5 3TH, UK)

THE SERMON "Volume" – CD

Wrap some scarves around these guys and call 'em the MAKERS. With the exception of a track or two ("Luzerne County" most notably), this is fairly punchless (unlike the best of the MAKERS stuff) 60s infused "garage" rock. The theremin on "Luzerne County" sounds great, the harmonica playing by a San Francisco rock legend on "No Beast..." is a nice touch, and the instrumental "491" rocks, but overall...zzzzzzzzzzz. (RR)
(Alternative Tentacles, PO Box 419092, San Francisco, Califonia 94141)

SHARK PANTS – "Porno Snakehead" LP

I would probably be more apt to praise this if I hadn't just moved here from the deeply unfortunate hipster capital of the world, Williamsburg Brooklyn, and if punk-with-a-rock-edge wasn't so annoyingly "cool" right

now. Add this band to the numbers mixing hard rock influences with their punk, something that should pretty much be left to *Feel the Darkness* and uh…that's it. Truth be told, the punk parts of this (which far outweigh the rock bits) sound really fucking great. This band is tight (and *fast)* as hell, the guitar sounds raw, and the vocalist is a great screamer. Despite my initial misgivings, I am actually fairly impressed by these Arizona punkers. Unfortunately, SHARK PANTS manage to kill some of their own best songs with some absolutely embarrasing Robert Plant falsetto parts; Led Zepplin worship is not only not punk, it is also pretty weird. Nonetheless, this record manages to be unique, and most importantly, fun. It's certainly a lot better than any JED WHITEY record I've ever heard. (GN)
(Recess, PO Box 1666, San Pedro, CA 90733)

THE SHOCKS – "Banned From The USA" EP

THE SHOCKS keep up their high standard with this quartet of classic-style punkers, thematically linked by songs about their first US tour, for which they received detention slips (reproduced on the inner sleeve). While "No America" didn't hit the spot for me, the rest of the songs zip by with brisk tempos and a style that, for me, recalls the CELIBATE RIFLES on a caffeine rush. Of course, this is recommended. (SS)
(Dirty Faces, Universaetsstr 16, 44789 Bochum, GERMANY)

SHOT BAKER – "Awake" CD

Rough, anthemic punk that at times sounds a little like THE PINKERTON THUGS. (AD)
(Underground Communique, 1220 W. Hood, Apt 1, Chicago, IL 60660)

SICK 56 / HIGGINS – split EP

Where the fuck did SICK 56 come from? Tremendous fast and furious punk rock like a more proficient and updated EXPLOITED. HIGGINS, which is a one-man project as far as I can tell, does "Cool Britannia Uber Alles," an updated version of the DEAD KENNEDYS track. Weak musically but very smart and on point lyrically which I imagine to be the whole point of the exercise. Not a bad record at all. (TB)
(JSNTGM, PO Box 1025, Blackpool, FY3 0FA, UNITED KINGDOM)

SINKIN' SHIPS - "Mayday" CD

Female fronted punk from Toronto not unlike JACK KILLED JILL or even THE GITS. The singer has a good voice, which is accentuated by occasional male backing vocals. The music's fast and the songs are short - the way it should be. This is pretty good. (AD)
(www.woundedpaw.com)

SIRENS – "Long Distance Calling" EP

You know I am not sure there is a decent song on this whole EP, but I don't really care. SIRENS bring a certain sincerity and feel to their music that I find refreshing. Sounding at times like a cross between the CONNIE DUNGS and RADON, SIRENS invoke the feel of the perfect band to play a Bay Area BBQ. You know, where life doesn't get any better than a cheap case of beer and seeing how high you can get the flames on the grill, all while waiting to eat and drink with friends. Life has good moments, and like this EP, they still make living more tolerable. (JF)
(1-2-3-4 Go!, www.1234gorecords.com)

SLARTYBARTFAST – "Ready for the Days of Glory" CD

Here's some quality energetic and melodic punk by a Swiss band that sings in fluent English. There are twelve solid songs with tendencies towards BAD RELIGION melodies, but they reveal their true influences with an unexpected hidden track. A pretty decent CD. (HM)
(Sprinter, Schwizerstr.2, CH-8610 Uster SWITZERLAND, www.sprinterrecords.com, www.slartybartfast.ch)

SLOTH / BELABOR – split EP

I can't believe *Maximum* wanted this reviewed. And I can't believe I'm spending any portion of my life critiquing it (sigh). Okay, here goes: the SLOTH side is bad beyond words. It's a joke, it's supposed to piss people off, yada yada, ANAL CUNT's been doing it for years, big deal. BELABOR's only marginally better. Noisy, lo-fi grind for people who think everyone's out to get them and who have hate lists longer than their thanks list on their records. Please do something more constructive with your time than listen to this. (EL)
(no address)

SMALLTOWN / PRACTICE – split EP

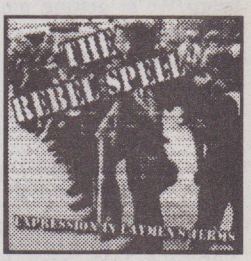
As always, Snuffy Smile delivers the goods. PRACTICE is a great Japanese band pillaging all things Florida, sounding a lot like the defunct legends RADON. Their side is great, but blown across the globe by best- band-of-the-decade SMALLTOWN, who continue their almost total domination of my record player. Truly amazing STIFF LITTLE FINGERS/NEUROTICS/CHORDS punk with hooks and choruses. One original which is as good as anything else they've done, and a staggering cover of the PURPLE HEARTS "Jimmy," which decimates the original and points towards their obvious mod influences. I've been bleating about this band every time they bring out a new record, but they really are *that* good. (TB)
(Snuffy Smile, 4-1-16-201 Daita Setagaya-Ku, Tokyo 155-0033, JAPAN)

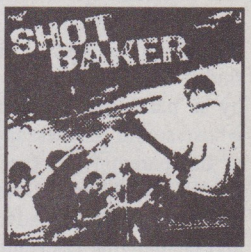
SNAKEBITE – "Feel The Buzz" EP

SNAKEBITE, from the East Coast, cranks out some straight forward hardcore. Apparently, this band is ex-DOWN IN FLAMES. The majority of these tunes are mid-tempo with a rockin' edge. The snarling vocals definitely give the songs a rougher feel, but I really believe that if the vocal style were different, the song interpretations would completely change. Oh, and it needs to be mentioned that these guys were recently on a makeover show on Discovery's The Learning Channel. The got made-over to look "punk". I haven't had a chance to see the show nor do I know how they got on it. But it sounds hilarious (and very tongue in cheek) and I look forward to seeing it. (RC)
(Don Giovanni, PO Box 15482, Boston, MA 02215, jstein@bu.edu)

SOVIETTES – "Alright / Plus One"

Three-quarters female punk rock from Minneapolis that speeds along while delivering ample hooks and





melody. I really like this band and was all ready to go see them on New Years Eve, but their van broke down or something. Two cuts here which are both good, though I like the herky-jerky flipside the best. It was only a matter of time before these guys ended up on Dirtnap. (AD)
(Dirtnap, PO Box 21249, Seattle, WA 98111)

SPARK - "Fashion Rats And Status Whores" EP

Smarty-pants hardcore reminding me of a few years back when the hardcore scene got a huge kick up the arse from bands like LIFES HALT and TEAR IT UP. The music belts along, but it's the lyrics that did it for me. Really astute and not afraid to point fingers: "We stand to the side with arms folded tight/While new bands play with all their hearts/We're getting more jaded with every day/I think it's time for a fresh start." Exactly. Nice WIRE cover too. (TB)
(Mike Fitzgerald, 652 Evelyn Ave, East Meadow, NY 1154-5427)

THE SPECTACLE – "Rope or Guillotine" CD

A chip off the ol' CrimethInc block, Norway's THE SPECTACLE charges full-speed ahead with 9 tracks of the kind of emotionally and politically charged hardcore we've come to know and love from everyone's favorite anarchistic collective. Musically this is basically the Frankenstein result of suturing TRAGEDY body parts onto a CATHARSIS frame, with plenty of speedy, dark, minor-key melody amidst the furious delivery of take-charge-of-your-somnambulant-existence lyrics. This is excellent stuff, and fans of the style new and old alike will be rocked and inspired. I do have to add that I find it a bit questionable when labels started by a particular band release other bands whose sound (or message) is nearly identical to the parent band (such as the case with CONVERGE and Deathwish), especially given CrimethInc's advocacy of originality and challenging convention. The insert is, of course, chock full of the usual CrimethInc rhetoric most *MRR* readers know by heart by now, but before I start sounding too negative, I still think this is a solid release which is well worth your time to inspect. (EL)
(CrimethInc, 2695 Rangewood Dr, Atlanta, GA 30345, crimethinc.com)

THE STOOGES - "Stukas Over Disneyland" LP

Live boot of a STOOGES' reunion show (9/13/03 in Nevers, France according to the jacket). Sound is clean but a bit thin, with too little guitar (probably a soundboard recording) but still Godlike. As with other boots of reunited STOOGES shows (and I don't know how many of 'em anyone needs, but this one is at least on vinyl instead of CD-R), this confirms that the awe and majesty I experienced when I saw them was not merely due to nostalgia for an era of which I was barely aware, though I'm sure it helped. (DD)
(no address)

SUPERCHUNK – "Crowding Up Your Visual Field" DVD

A great video collection from these indie punk darlings. Included are their videos, more videos, a movie of a 2001 tour (three countries covered), live clips from all era's, and an interview. Awesome stuff with some great low budget clips. I was gonna whip thru the highlights first time round but ended up watching the whole thing. A strong musical and witty visual experience. Like I've said before SUPERCHUNK are one of the 90s best bands period! (RL)
(Merge, www.mergerecords.com)

SUPPRESSION - "Release the Piranha" CD

Blasting, weirdo, wall-of-noise, distorto fucked up punk rock. Ten tracks culled from recordings over the last three years. "Release the Piranha (Into The Gene Pool)" is pure genius: "mail my head to Afghanistan/ drop the bomb/ wax the gland/ wear the t-shirt/ buy the magnet/conceive a cab driver/watch Dragnet/release the Piranha into the gene pool." "I Masturbated when the Challenger Shuttle Exploded" is precious. I like this quite a bit. Fans of the band will love it, and fans of the BUTTHOLE SURFERS, FAT DAY, LIGHTNING BOLT or MR. CALIFORNIA who haven't checked out these long running loons could start right here. (RR)
(Underradar, PO Box 1641, Seaford, NY 11783)

TALK HARD / RADICAL ATTACK – split EP

TALK HARD starts thing off with a wild attack of metal thrash. Riffs lifted straight from SLAYER mixed with a bit of slow, chunky NY style hardcore. They get bonus points for the song title of the month, "Feed The Crust Punks To The Real Homeless." RADICAL ATTACK follows up with four songs of tough angry hardcore songs. Ranging from fast and furious to slow and driving, they pack a solid punch. (RC)
(Moo Cow, 38 Larch Circle, Belmont, MA 02478, moocowrecords.com)

THE TOUGH & LOVELY – "Born Of The Stars" CD

This sounds very similar to DETROIT COBRAS with one very noticeable difference: this band writes their own songs. A powerful female singer leads a garage band singing songs of heartbreak. If this had more grit, it would possibly be one of the best albums of the year. (CK)
(Spoonful, no address)

TWENTY TO ONE – "Suburban Battlecry" EP

Mediocre hardcore from young, straight edge kids in Boston who sing about young love, staying strong, and being "Drug Free till the Grave." Enough said. (SR)
(FNS, PO Box 1299, Boston, MA 02130, FNSBoston.net)

UNDERMINDED – "Hail Unamerican!" CD

I just can't get a break this month. This is horrible. This just makes me shake my head in disbelief. UNDERMINDED play "Warped Core" at it's very worst. While I may be somewhat removed from this scene of shaggy black hair, nautical star tattoos, and side lip piercings, I *can* tell you that this is way too slow, and has waaaaay too many overproduced gang vocals. This band makes SHAI HULUD sound like God's gift to music. (CC)
(Kung Fu, PO Box 38009, Hollywood, CA 90038)

UNDER PRESSURE – "Habits" EP

Canada's UNDER PRESSURE blasts out six ferocious tracks of straight-forward hardcore packed with fuzz and anger that is consistent with the other great releases that Sound Pollution has earned it's reputation for. Fans of the label won't be disappointed.
(VH)
(Sound Pollution, PO Box 17742, Covington, KY 41017, www.sound-pollution.com)

USELESS INTENT - "Destined For Failure" CD

Good, angry, fast punk from Southern California. Reminds me a lot of BLUE COLLAR SPECIAL or a rougher PENNYWISE. (AD)
(Useless Intent, PO Box 6495, Whittier, CA 90609)

VICTIMS OF SOCIETY – "...The Gloves Come Off" CD

10 songs of mid-paced to fast Belgian hardcore with screamed vocals. The music is good, but the vocals are just way too high-pitched for me to get behind. Imagine Rob from BY THE GRACE OF GOD singing for BURN, and then you might be able to picture where this band is coming from. (CC)
(Funtime, Vlasselaer 13 3221, Nieuwrode (Holsbeek) BELGIUM)

VICTIMS – "...In Blood" LP

A solid follow-up to last year's split LP with FROM ASHES RISE, this VICTIMS LP is more confident, modern Swedish hardcore with tasteful US hardcore leanings. While, in terms of production and sound this band has most in common with their countrymates (and labelmates) WOLFBRIGADE and SKITSYSTEM, VICTIMS is probably the most straight-forward (read: least "crusty") of the

three, with some definite *Feel The Darkness*-era POISON IDEA vocal parts and guitar riffs. If you are already a fan of VICTIMS, you will not be disappointed, as this is assuredly their best release to date. As to be expected, this Havoc release is bolstered by some nice bonuses: a full color poster with the LP, and the option for colored vinyl for mailorder nerds. (GN)
(Havoc, PO Box 8585, Minneapolis, MN 55408, havocrex.com)

THE VILLIANS – "Crime of Life / Reflexive Paranoia"

Fuck yes! This is Boston punk rock like its supposed to be! These fuckers go into attack mode immediately with "Crime of Life." This is blistering hardcore punk with lyrics about the frustration of trying to make it in this day and age. THE VILLIANS sing, "My past is gone / My future's gone / But what do I expect? / I'm a slave in my own mind / A slave to my paycheck..." These are good lyrics about real, everyday life! "Reflexive Paranoia" is another unsettling song with desperation a fury peeling off in layers! Excellent! THE VILLIANS ask: "What does it take to make you snap...Caressing the trigger of a motherfucking gun?" This is good stuff! Write for your VILLIANS 45 as soon as possible! (BR)
(FNS, PO Box 1299, Boston, MA 02130, www.fnsboston.net)

VUOTI PERSI – "Genrerazione In Fiamme" CD

Lackluster Italian metallic hardcore with an Oi edge. A more metallic STRYCHNINE would suffice as a comparison. They even manage to do terrible injustice to an EXPLOITED song, which is hard to believe. Dreadful. (TB)
(Anfibio, Via Brenti 5, 26100 Cremona, ITALY)

WAR OF WORDS – 12"

WAR OF WORDS mix up some of that old anarcho sound—especially that of DIRT—with the more recent sounds of fellow Europeans BURNING KITCHEN. Dual vocals, with nice trade off between a gruff male and a more melodic female. At times reminiscent of a dirtier LIFE...BUT HOW TO LIVE IT, with a slight hint off LEARTHERFACE. Definitely part of the better crop of anarcho bands, dealing with the politics we have come to expect from this genre without getting too clichéd. I can dance to this and I bet you could too. (SD)
(Kamaset Levty, www.punkinfinland.net/kamanen/kamaset.html)

WITCHHUNT – "...As Priorities Decay" LP

After countless live shows, a couple of tours, and some early 7"s, New Jersey's WITCHHUNT return with their first full length release on Profane Existence. They clearly spent a lot of time in putting this LP together, musically, lyrically, and aesthetically. There cover art is tasteful yet poignant, and the insert includes lyrics, explanations from all three band members, a punk-as-fuck collage (Donald Rumsfeld, plus a dive-bombing Dick Cheney, plus gask-mask wearing ballet dancers = punk art!), and a huge poster. The songs range from hardcore thrashers ("Mindless Entity") to more moody, peace-punk influenced tracks, which are at their best when Nicole and Janine sing as well as scream ("Sugercoated Yet It Festers Inside"). Those two are standout tracks, as is the excellent mid-tempo rocker "By A Thread." Not just typical by-the-numbers punk rock, a number of different influences are at play on this record. The best thing Profane Existence has released in a while. (GN)
(Profane Existence, PO Box 8722, Minneapolis MN, 55408)

WOGGLES – "I Got A Line On You" EP

It's strange as a veteran of the 90s garage wars to observe which bands are still standing now that the dust has long settled. The WOGGLES? Their stuff on Estrus pretty much defined middle-of-the-road in the mid 90s, just straight-up 60s re-creations, sort of like a slightly hipped-up wedding band. Well, they've gotten a tad rawer in the presentation and at least pulled the stick halfway out. They are now better than many bands that crawl out of Europe these days, for whatever that's worth. (RW)
(Chicken Ranch, PO Box 703, Franklin, TX 37065)

THE WORST FIVE MINUTES OF YOUR LIFE – "The Worst Five Minutes Of Your Life" EP

What you got here is blistering fast frantic hardcore from Portland (I think) with a touch of grind thrown in for good measure. The recording is five years old so I'm not sure if these guys are even around anymore, but I hope so cuz this stuff is pretty crazy. KUNG FU FICK comes to mind most immediately in comparison—they've got the same feel of sheer chaos and reckless insanity to their tunes with a sense of humor as well. Well worth checking out. (EL)
(Planet Mistake, 5415 NE 39th Ave., Portland, OR 97211, theworstfive@hotmail.com)

XWITNESSX – "Breakaway" EP

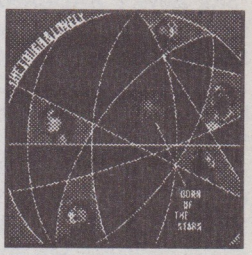
Just like it says in the letter that accompanies this release, XWITNESSX is a "vegan sXe (compassionate not militant) band from Rochester, NY." Fast hardcore with a melodic edge, and some of the screechiest vocals I have heard in a while. Not too bad at all. (RC)
(Third Party, 21 Nancy Ln., Amherst, NY 14228, thirdxparty.com)

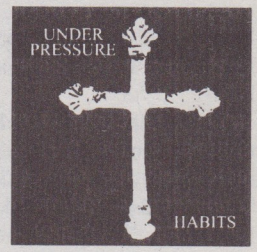
YOU'RE NEXT – "Pushing Forward" EP

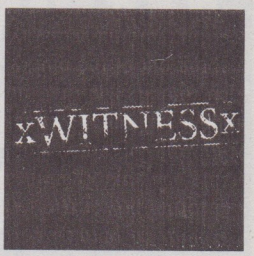
Seven songs of fast, raging, hardcore out of Chula Vista. I am really getting an old Nardcore feel from the vocalist, but the occasional moshy breakdowns remind me less of ILL REPUTE and more of IN CONTROL. Regardless, this record has California written all over it. This is a pretty solid debut release. (CC)
(High Fidelity, PO Box 1071, Grover Beach, CA 93483)

ZOLAR X – "Timeless" CD

Glam and science fiction usually didn't mix in the 70s, as glam was usually cut through with big boas and kitschy cultural references from the 20s and 30s, but these guys were a breed apart. Imagine a band fronted by Vulcan extras from first season *Star Trek*, playing anthemic proto-punk rock with total conviction. ZOLAR X wandered around the nascent LA club scene, sharing lots of stages with the Masque crowd and cutting demos that never got released at the time. They don't sound full-on exclusively glam; it's an ele-







ment in their overall synthy-punk attack. Jello compares them to CHROME in the liner notes, and that's about the right galaxy, but with less ice and more personality. I believe this is also on vinyl. (RW)
(Alternative Tentacles, PO Box 419092, San Francisco, CA 94141)

V/A - BRABANTIA NOSTRA CD

I have mixed thoughts about this sampler from Holland's Rebellion Records. Many of these Dutch Oi/streetpunk bands are decent, even really good, but every compilation has its flunkies. The bands cover a very wide range of sounds from Oi! with super gruff vocals and anger-fueled choruses, to straight street punk, to punk with a slight twang. Most notable are KNOCKDOWN (with an Oi! infused cover of SOCIAL DISTORTION'S "Sick Boys"), BADLANDS (great vocals, a bit COCK SPARRER-esque), GET OUT, SQUALOR, and RAZORBLADE. And then we have the sexists GECKO BROTHERS assholes with their inexcusable song "Give That Bitch a Beer." Well, this bitch would like to say eat shit fuck face! (SR)
(Rebellion, Engstoep57, 5246 BD Rosmalen, NETHERLANDS, info@rebellionrecords.nl, info@rebellionrecords.nl)

V/A – "Captain Everything / Divit / Belvedere: Live At Camden Underworld" DVD

No fade ins or overhead shots here. Side of the stage shots a la Flipside video. A fun live show led by the UK's CAPTAIN EVERYTHING and their fun punk like "There's No I In Scene". Thrashing thru the pop ditties. Canada's BELVEDERE also cranks out some decent speedy melodic hardcore. A decent DVD. (RL)
(Punkervision, www.punkervision.net)

V/A – "Newest Industry 2002-2004" CD

No-brainer comp from by far and away the best label to come out of the UK in *years*. Some of my favorite bands of the moment are featured herein, some with unreleased tracks, most notably FOUR LETTER WORD, ANNALISE, NO CHOICE, BLACK COUGAR SHOCK UNIT, PHOENIX FOUNDATION and FIFTH HOUR HERO. It's impossible to pigeon hole this label, so let's just say that they seem to be able to pick some of the most exciting, driving, straight up punk bands around today to release. There are only a couple of bands that fall short (SHONBEN and BEDFORD FALLS), only because they are alongside such greats. Get this. (TB)
(Newest Industry, Unit 100, 61 Wellfield Road, Cardiff CF24 3DG, UK)

V/A – "Railroad to Apocalypse" CD

An excellent six-way split of European grind bands, with several tracks from each. DISARM from Italy, are furious grind / metal that's surprisingly varied with excellent political lyrics. Seriously fast and intense- awesome stuff! VERGE ON REASON are unexceptional noisy German grind. The miserably named BUD JUNKEES are actually above-average pot-obsessed mid-paced grind from Finland with a killer fuzzy guitar sound, almost like a hardcore OBITUARY. ALIENACJA, from Poland, are up next with some seriously brutal death/grind, like rougher rawer mid-period NAPALM DEATH. MATKA TERESA are fairly standard screamy hardcore/grind from Holland, but they get points for their co-opting of a MANOWAR song. Lastly, Belgium's SPLEEN are all over the place, from sheer death metal to stoner rock to "what the fuck?" singing moments. It's weird and unpredictable, and surprisingly, it works more often than not. There's a good amount of variety here to reward the more curious grind fan—every band's different, and they're all new to me at least. None are bad and some, like DISARM, are downright great. (EL)
(Zas Autoproduzioni, www.go.to/zas, Tetanus, http://tetanus.cjb.net)

V/A – "Vila Velha Noise Beach" CD

A half-decent (literally) four-way split of Brazilian hardcore/grind bands here. AJUDANTI DI PAPAI NOEL start things off with fast but ultimately forgettable power violence-their best song is a cover (SPAZZ), and that's never a good sign. Next up is CHRISTMAS SHIT, who are more straight-forward grind and even less inspiring. Third is I SHIT ON YOUR FACE, and, ok, I'm gonna lose all credibility here but—I actually liked these guys best. Gurgling, thick-as-tar lo-fi grind that's super dumb and simplistic, but it's just so extreme- the singer does this pitch-shifted scream that's so ridiculous it sounds just like a squealing pig—I can't stop listening. The song titles all center around shit-eating and are potentially down-right offensive, and I know I can't defend that or convince someone not already well-versed in grind of the appeal, but…what can I say, I'm a sucker for the South Park samples. Lastly, CHUCK NORRIS (bad name guys) chime in with some hyper-intense HELLNATION-style grind/power violence. Most songs don't reach the 30 second mark so you know it's fast and furious. Worth it for the last two bands-there's some weird shit going on in Brazil these days. (EL)
(Laja, Caixa Postal, 25519 Vila Velha – ES CEP 29102 – 973, BRASIL, laja.com.br)

V/A – "Welcome to Circus Punk-A-Billy—The Sickest Show On Earth" CD

This comp features 30 bands, primarily from Europe, serving up a variety of rockabilly. Highlights include NEKROMANTIX, SHARK SOUP, KLINGONZ, LOS CATALEPTICOS, FLESH, BANANE METALIK and THE PSYCLONES. Another fine Wolverine comp featuring plenty of quality tracks. (HM)
(Wolverine, Kaiserswerther Str. 166, 400474 Düsseldorf GERMANY www.wolverine-records.de)

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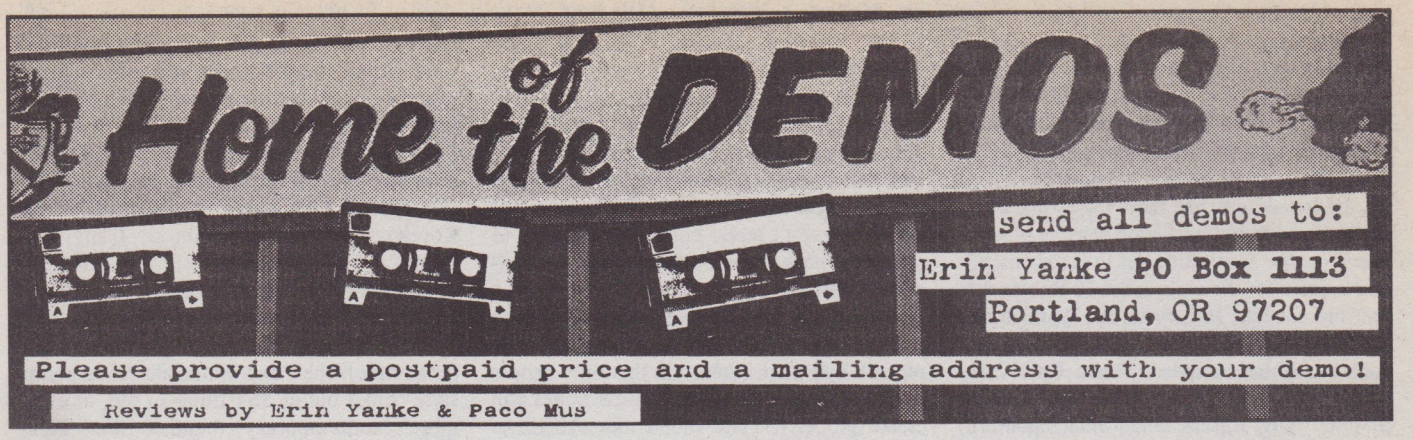

AKASHA play anguish-core. Slow and upset, lots of technical prowess, emo vocals, and long songs. (12 song CD, lyrics included. 1000 S. Cooper, Memphis, TN 38104.)

ALTERCADO from Chile charge ahead with straightforward hardcore. Their sound is pretty solid and modern without losing their old-school taste, and fall somewhere between the best recordings of APATIA NO and the old DISCHORD bands. I could do without the blast beats though. Their demo "Fragmentos" comes in a 7" booklet with political lyrics and explanations both in Spanish and English. The quality of the recording is incredible and the passion and care put in the entire demo is priceless, Get this. (11 song CD, lyrics included. Reaccion Discos, Pje.11 #415, Capricornio, Graneros, Chile reaccion56@latinmail.com) (Paco)

THE BLOW GOES play sloppy good ol' punk rock. Sometimes they have more catchiness, and sometimes have a dirtier sense about them, reflected mostly in the slightly slower pace. The vocals are shared, always sung, but sometimes more nasally than others. They sound fun, and I'm now a fan. ($2 ppd. 5 song CD, no lyrics included. 1324 S. 9th St, Philadelphia, PA 19147.)

CENTURY OF WAR plays what can be described as DISCHARGE via Sweden influenced hardcore with a lot of Texas attitude to boot. Huge wall of guitar and mega distorted bass lines mixed with relentless drumming and a vocalist spitting words about war and suffering makes this a really promising demo. Definitely not as poetic as the Stoke boys, this is still pretty solid and promising. Fans of WORLD BURNS TO DEATH take note. (5 song CD, lyrics included. losbandidosrec@yahoo.com) (Paco)

CHAOTIC MESS is another generic SUICIDAL TENDENCIES (golden-era) worship unit. These boys seem to be obsessed with skateboards and with having shock value lyrics with pretty bad taste. Dude, making 16 year old girls bleed after getting them high isn't funny and making cheap jokes about gays is so 90s that it actually destroys your 80s wannabe image. Anyway, the music: it reminds me a bit too much of the VITU'S DANCE side of their split with HHH—bad thrash trying to be hardcore. Their 80's *Welcome To Venice* style artwork would look better as a tape cover if you ask me. Hopefully they'll grow up both musically and lyrically. (13 song CD, lyrics included. 812 W. 9th Ave., Escondido, CA 92025, escotrasher@yahoo.com) (Paco)

So **DANNY COCKSTAR & THE MONEYSHOTS** played a show in "Hellywood" and came out of it with a demo. 4 long tracks with lots of public clapping and screaming in between of their basic slow pace rockabilly punk. Buzzing rocking guitar riffs and stand up bass set the scenery for the loud lead vocals of DANNY COCKSTAR the lyrics of which are all sex related. As much as they may hate it, the drum beat of the first song is a D-beat. ($4 ppd. 4 song CD, no lyrics included. PO Box 6535, Stateline, NV 89449, danarchy1369@hotmail.com) (Paco)

THE DICKTOWN BOYS are made up of drum machines and synthesizers, great lyrics, funny samples, and lo-fi sensibilities. The vocals are monotone, spoken, and layered. ($2 ppd. 11 (we think—) song cassette, no lyrics included. 709 E. 3rd ST. #14, Long Beach, CA 90802.)

EVIL EXISTENCE is the meeting of furious thrash and metallic sensibilities. The singing is screaming, both high pitched, almost only in the range of dog whistles, and the super low guttural moans. They mix it up with break-it-down parts. The CD's aren't that different, just in recording quality. The newer one is the shorter one. ($3 ppd. for the 8 song CD, $1 ppd. for the 3 song CD, lyrics included. 2163 Hoople St., Ft. Meyers, FL 33901.)

THE EXECUTION sound like good hard punk rock of the mid-80s mixed with fancy guitar leads, at a fast pace for head banging, but a slow pace for thrashing. The vocals are some screaming, and some ranting. ($3 USD. 6 song cassette, lyrics included. PO Box 239, Nth Carlton, Vic. 3054, Australia.)

GRAYHOUND from France's demo, "The Sound and The Fury," features four songs of old-school hardcore punk. It's simple and effective with lots of melody and energy, complete with good hooks and solid riffs ala GORILLA BISCUITS. With good personal/ political lyrics and a great DIY attitude, I am sure we'll hear from this band again. (4 songs plus one intro CD, lyrics included. 11 Rue de Keravelloc, 29200 Brest, France. www.grayhound.fr.st) (Paco)

INVERTED is a total rocknroll one-man four track band. Very TIGHT BROS influenced. The pace is mid-tempo and driving, the drums sound really tough, and the vocals are kind of shouted, kind of sing-song screaming. He also does an ACTION SWINGERS cover. ($3 ppd. 8 song cassette, no lyrics included. 501 S. Sycamore St., Genoa IL 60135.)

The **KYKLOOPPIEN SUKUPUUTTO** demo CD from Tampere, Finland is amazing in every single sense: great sound quality, nice layout, and a separate sheet with their lyrics translated into English. Their music is a punch in the face–an unrelenting chaotic all-out attack. The drumming stands over the rest, never stopping and going as fast as possible without reaching into grind territories. The guitar is dark and straightforward with really interesting progressions, and the vocals have the sense of urgency that I consider a trademark of Finnish punk. The lyrics are an intelligent critique of modern civilization from a personal point of view. To top it off, members used to play in TAMPERE SS, KIROUS, and TOTUUS. I just can't wait to get more from these Finns. ($2.50 ppd. 9 track CD, lyrics included. Jonne Kauko, Vallikatu 30-32 B7, 33240 Tampere, Finland. elcolombiano@jippii.fi) (Paco)

LAST PRIEST play a mix of mid-tempo musical hardcore, and some tough youth-crew style. The vocals are shouted for the most part, although he sure busts out with some tormented screams. They also do a CHANNEL 3 cover. ($2 ppd. 6 song cassette, lyrics included. PO Box 126434, San Diego, CA 92112-6434.)

MOTUMBOS HOSPITAL have a firm grip on the sensibilities of the mid-90s emo scene, with a pinch of college rock. Mid to slow tempoed, changing up the pace occasionally, with a crooner singing guy. (5 song CD, no lyric sheet. 1234 Latona St., Philadelphia, PA 19147.)

PUNK OCCUPATION is a whole series of comps put out by Sanya Tanicovoch of The Nayku out of St. Petersburg. He sent in 6 tapes! All the information is in Russian, and luckily Chanel translated a bunch of it for us—#1, #3, and #5 are just labeled *Punk Occupation*, while #2 is *Made in Siberia*, #4

is *Made in Karelia,* and #6 is *Made in Israel.* It's hard to generalize about this many bands and this much music, but all the comps. have a good sense of flow to them, while exploring many sub-genres of punk rock. Absolutely something here for everyone, and exploring the world by cassette tape is a beautiful thing. #6, the Israeli one, had more bands that I recognized and might be a good starting place to check out the sensibilities of the tape compiler. No price for the comps, but 10 Rubles gets you the catalog. Just write and work it out! Totally worth it. (6 cassettes, about 20 songs each. no lyrics included. Fenka RnR/Crazy Rat, Galkin K.V. (CR), A/YA 76, 1988099, St. Petersburg, Russia. fenka@mail.spbnit.ru)

PSEUDO-MELLOR has their feet firmly in Midwestern punk rock, living up the mix of melody and angst. Sometimes mid era REPLACEMENTS style, sometimes sounding like one of the more straightforward songs off *Bloodstains Across The Midwest* with "Pain and age make people philosophical" running through the whole thing. They have 2 demos, but if you ask nice, they might put all four songs on one CD. (3 song CD, no lyrics included. 20544 Mission Road, Stillwell, KS 66085.)

RIOT ACT starts their demo with a BLITZ riff and that's always promising! This gang of UK punks set a slow pace in their first song and it lasts for the entire length. Lots of old UK influences here, but I totally think they are more along the lines of new bands like BARSE than PETER AND THE TEST TUBE BABIES. This is mid-tempo punk with great riffage and a solid rhythm section. They speed up at times giving you that feeling that you get whilst listening to records by old punk bands playing hardcore before hardcore was invented. Seems like their lyrics are totally tongue in cheek but since they are not included I can't really comment on them. (5 song CD, no lyrics included. www.iwannariot.com) (Paco)

ROCKASS from Berlin have a new demo out and you can tell that they love the infamous 8-ball punk rock style that only people from Scandinavia and the United States can create properly. They sound more HELLACOPTERS than STOOGES so I guess they're doing well. Great sound quality a good pick for the rockers amongst us. (4 songs CD, no lyrics included www.rockass.org) (Paco)

SEND MORE COPS from Boston just released a great early 90s hate-core influenced demo, bringing CITIZENS ARREST to mind at times, but without their foreign punk feeling and higher pitched vocals. This is fast, angry, and political hardcore with uncompromising lyrics. The cover art could be more inventive, but I'm looking forward to getting more cops. (6 song CD, lyrics included. 868 Huntington Ave. Apt#3, Boston, MA 02116. www.sendmorecops.tk) (Paco)

SUCKZ seems to think that "War is Art," so they named their demo tape accordingly. Let me tell you that this is a weird demo tape with South Korean DIY guitar / vox combo that sounds like if the guitar cab speakers were busted and the singer was singing from inside a bottle. All things considered, this is a great demo tape, somewhere between DAWSON and any of the thousands of homemade-recorded noise projects from the early 90s. ($2 ppd, 3 song demo, lyrics included in Korean. 842-7 Myungryun 2, Gangwon, Wonju, 220-948 S.Korea. snotty80@netian.com) (Paco)

THE TEETH are a post punk band that actually has good strong punk rock roots. It's about time! Their experimental and sporadic style comes out of SST times of old, or even more contemporary bands like THE MONORCHID. The vocals are spoken for the most part, but even when shouted they are well annunciated. Quality. (14 song CD, no lyrics included. 426 Second St. Apt. 4, Ann Arbor, MI 48103.)

THE VEX are a four piece punk band from San Jose that deliver a great 4 track demo, somewhere between THE UNDERDOGS, NEGATIVE APPROACH, and SOCIAL DISTORTION. Best described as mid-tempo hardcore punk led by aggressive vocals with an old school UK82 feeling. This is catchy at times, simple, and definitely effectively written tunes. PUNK ROCK. (4 song CD, no lyrics included. www.thevex.com) (Paco)

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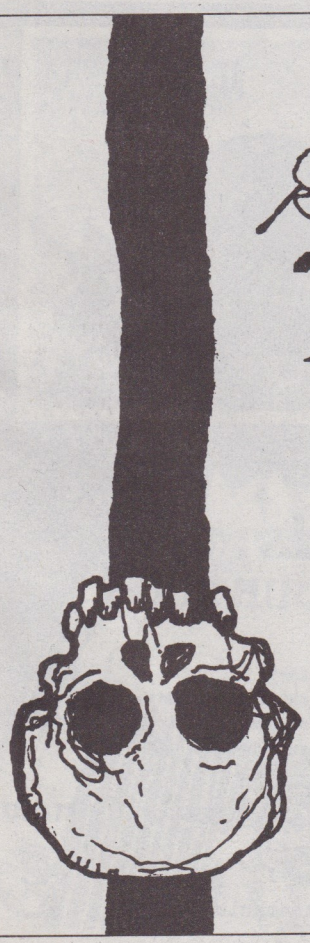

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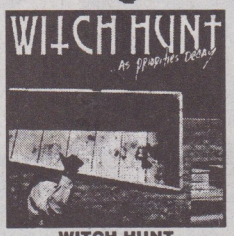

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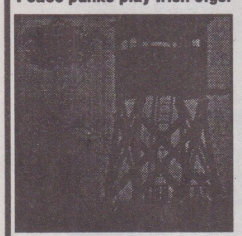

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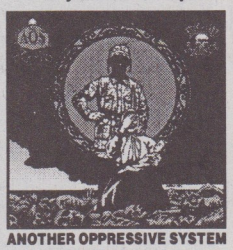

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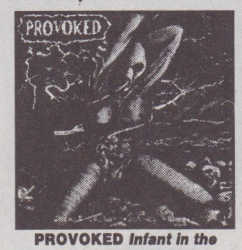

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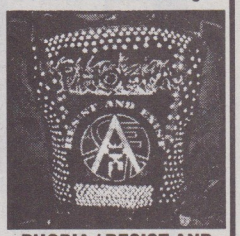

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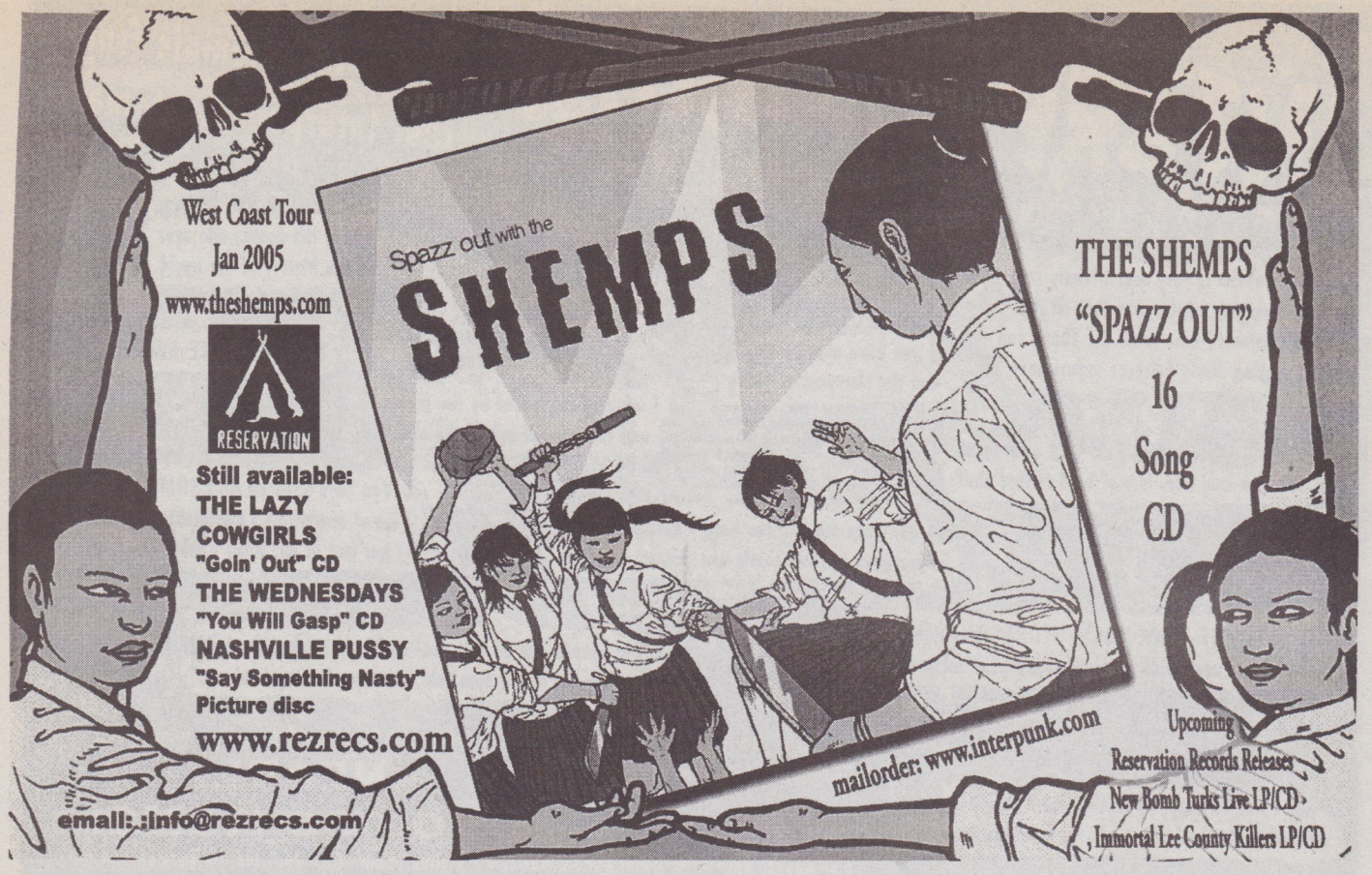
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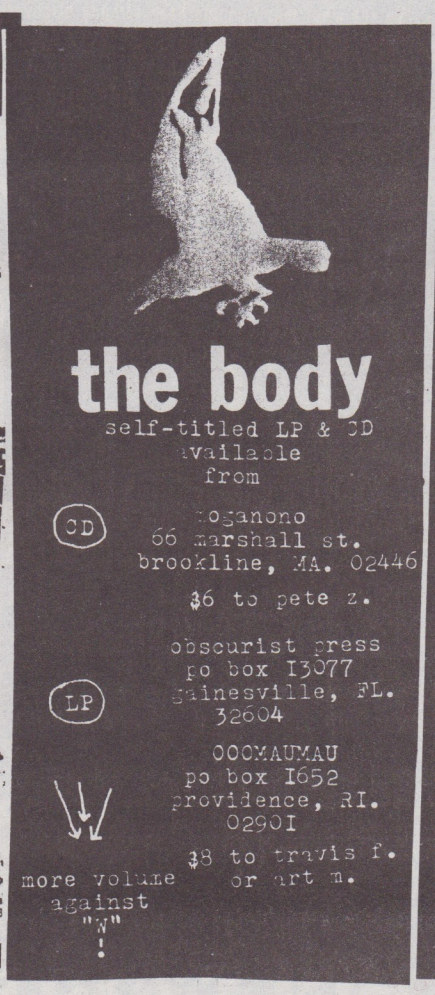
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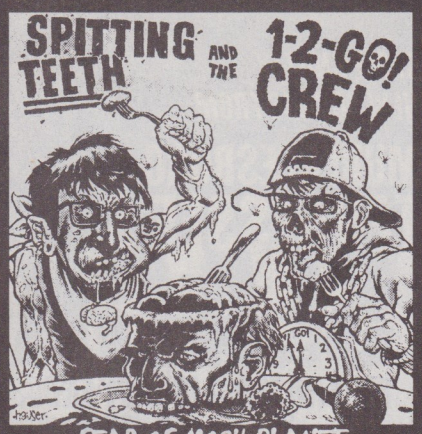

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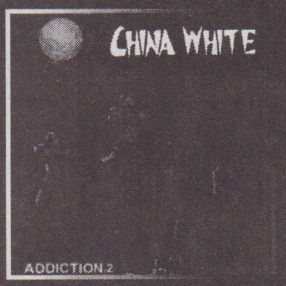

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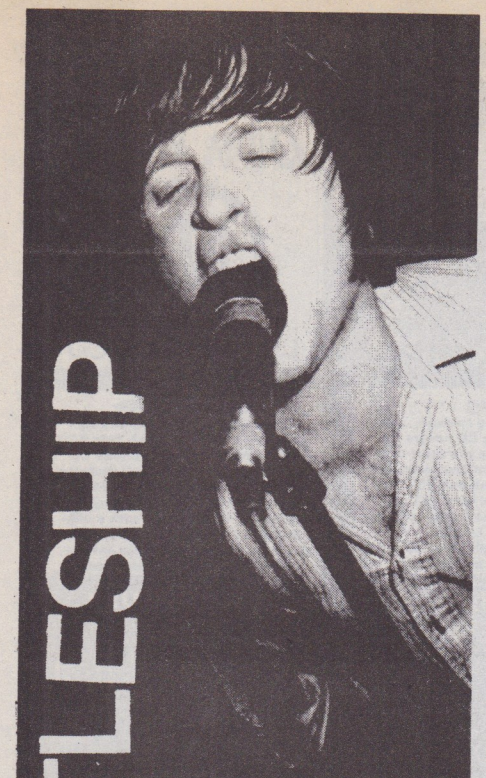

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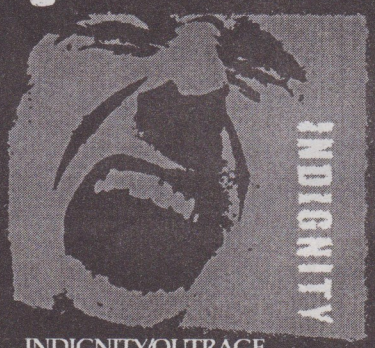

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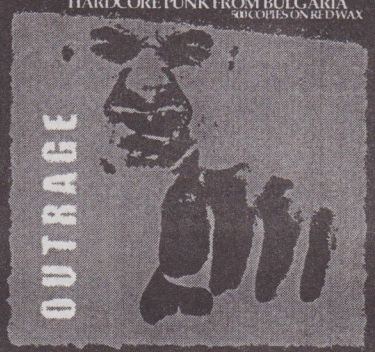

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ZINES

Reviews by: (AC) Arwen Curry, (AR) Aragorn, (JB) Julia Booz Ullrey, (MD) Mikel Delgado, (MF) Maree Faygo, (JH) Jeff Heermann, (CH) Cassie Harwood, (HH) Harald Hartmann, (CJ) Chloe Jensen, (JM) Jeff Mason, (MN) Mimi Nguyen, (CR) Casey Ress, (AV) Andy Van Buren Shoup, (MT) Mike Thorn, (ME) Melissa Toimel.

Please send your zine in for review. Write down any information you want included in the review; method of printing, number of pages, issue number and post paid price. If you want us to include a foreign post paid price, tell us. If you accept trades, tell us. The only information we will include is what you provide us.

2048 #1 / $3 + $2 shipping / trade
8.5 x 5.5 - printed - 32 pgs
Wow, an actual comic book with a plot and good art. I'm impressed. This comic takes place in a post apocalyptic America under Dictator Dubya. It follows the adventures of three Punk Rock Girl Revolutionaries. This is reminiscent of *Tank Girl*. The only problem I have with this is that it falls into the trap of having female characters with big boobs and short skirts. Other than that it's a great comic and I look forward to future issues. (CQ)
PO Box 1733 / Binghamton, NY 13902

ABORT! #16 / $2
5.5 x 8.5 - copied - 40 pgs
Over time, the author of *Abort!* has greatly improved as a writer. The flow and meter of this issue is quite competent. The content, alas, is still mostly personal, subjective, and uninteresting. This issue would be best as the after side of a before and after demonstration of zine writing. Either that or as an example of private writing best shared with people you know who may well be interested in where you spent a night in Germany or your thoughts about Chomsky. (AR)
Jon / 45 E 7th St #106 / NY, NY 10003

AK INK #10 / free
7 x 8.5 - copied - 20 pgs
The best thing about this one is the cover, which features a drawing of a little baby punk in utero with a little spiked mohawk, leather jacket, and little anarchy tattoo on its butt with a beer bottle connected to its umbilical cord. The rest of the zine kinda sucks. For one thing, the reviews are focused on the bands' ability to attract girl audience members. The comic about a girl superhero has the villain calling her a stupid bitch in every frame, which is irresponsible and not even funny, and she kills punks, what the fuck!? The review of Fahrenheit 9/11 ends with the joke "what do my girlfriend and America have in common? They both need to lose their Bush!" While all of these factors indicate bro-ism, there isn't even one aspect of the zine that redeems or counteracts this shit. Not even worth stamps that you steal from your mom. (JB)
AK Ink / Anchorage Punk Zine / PO Box 244235 / Anchorage, AK 99524

AMERICA? #12 / $1
4.5 x 5.5 - copied - 24 pgs
This is a cute little thing that is one part snippets and one part travelogue. While the snippets would have you believe that the author subscribed to a certain political militancy, the travelogue portrays the author as more of a lush than a politico. This is very approachable, lightweight, and something I wouldn't mind having pressed into my sweaty claw at the next show I'm at. (AR)
PO Box 13077 / Gainesville, FL 32604-1077

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL HOUSE OF PANCAKES #1 / $1
5.5 x 8.5 - copied - 20 pgs
Tristan Dufresne does this one out of Dania, Florida, and in it you'll find an article on codes and ciphers, an interview with Tristan's pops about 60s activism, and a stirring retelling of Tristan's dream about Vin Diesel. It all appears to be in earnest, but the result is a little weak. (AV)
1065 SE 6th Ave / Dania, Fl 33004

ANTI-PANTS #9 / $1
8.5 x 11 - copied - 38 pgs.
My good friend Cassie reviewed this zine last month and argued that there was too much pants-wearing going on. I think they took her constructive criticism to heart, because in this issue, there is a whole page dedicated to the "Official Stud Muffin" doing household chores not wearing pants. Totally weird. The editors also threw in a Warped Tour review and interviews with the Bouncing Souls, The Unseen and many more. I was totally into the horoscopes. Not a bad job—worth checking out. (MF)
PO Box 3950 / San Dimas, CA 91773

ARF #1 / £1 / $2 / trade
5.75 x 8.25 - copied - 40 pgs
Jimmy's dedicated to his hometown scene and it shows—interviews with Anal Beard, Weapons Of Brass Destruction, Yeovil, S24, Acorn Records—plus a scene report, zine and record reviews. Totally insane, but really great cut'n paste layout with mountains of drawings and other artwork. Totally a good start and hope he keeps it up. (MT)
49 St James St / South Petherton / Somerset / TA13 5BN / United Kingdom
jimbillb@hotmail.com

BAND AID CANCER #1 / $1 + stamps/trade
8.5 x 4.5 - copied - 30 pgs
Stu, if you want people to read your zine then the first thing you have to do is make the writing legible. The parts of this issue I could make out were about a trip to Philly and a weekend of vagrancy. Stu looked for some punks to hang out with but it seems like most of the kids he met were either grumpy or jerks. I couldn't read the last page like at all so I don't know what happened at the end of the story. I guess that's just another one of life's great mysteries. (CH)
240 E Kline Ave / Lansford, PA 18232

BAND AID CANCER #2 / $1 + stamps/trade
6.5 x 4.25 - copied - 28 pgs
This issue of *Band Aid Cancer* is all about movies; there's bits about how independent films are beginning to gain more attention while major motion pictures continue to earn unnecessary hype, as well as the depressing tendency people seem to have towards star worship. There's a bunch of movie-related links and some interesting ideas overall. Yeah, this zine leads a discussion that gives you some interesting things to think about. Also, the writing in this issue is much more legible so good job Stu! (CH)
240 E Kline Ave / Lansford, PA 18232

BEHIND THE TIMES #3 / $2
7 x 8.5 - copied - 34 pgs.
A diamond in the rough as far as music zines are concerned, *Behind the Times* in jam-packed with quite a few interviews with some of the more popular bands these days. My picks are the interviews with Cut the Shit and From Ashes Rise. Also comes with a neat little article about Heresy and some killer hardcore haikus. The computer-generated layout was done tastefully. If this was an algebra test and I was a math teacher, I would give this an A+. (MF)
191 Benjamin Street / Schenectady, NY 12303

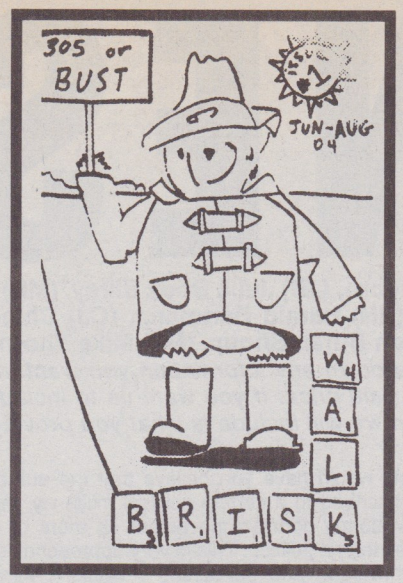
BLACK HOODIES AND BROKEN HEARTS
#1 / free or trade
5.5 x 8 - copied - 20 pgs
With a name like that, how can you go right, right? I'm pleased to report this is nowhere as painful as the name indicates. Instead of doomed punk love clichés, Des writes light-hearted accounts of various adventures, like sneaking into a red carpet premiere and exploring an abandoned prison. It's nothing spectacular, but it's a fun ten minutes' diversion. (AC)
Des / 15 Main St / Hyde Park, NY 12538
escapefromnytoday@yahoo.com

THE BOTTLETREE READER #1 / $1
5.5 x 8.5 - copied - 20 pgs.
The Bottletree Reader is a zine composed of several poems and two comic stories. The poetry was above average. The comics conveyed a mood, and a state of mind, but in the end were confusing. The main story, entitled "Apartment Mind" was about a shut-in who is tormented by some guy rifling through his garbage, which seemed like a pretty promising start. In the last quarter of the story or so, however, everything breaks down in a way that simply wasn't interesting. What happened? I honestly can't say. Lines of dialogue are crossed out and replaced by others, the same character appears twice in the same frame, or, *is* that the same character? I don't know. If I didn't think that a little more effort could make this a lot better, I would just dismiss it. Gentleman, you have earned yourself exactly one do-over. (AV)

5850 Lisloy Dr / Mobile, AL 36608

BOXCUTTER #5 / $1
4.5 x 5.5 - copied - 24 pgs.
A little political and a little personal, *Boxcutter* comes to us from right here in the Bay Area. This is the best zine of a personal nature that I've read in ages. Buy it now, dude. (MF)
Tomas / 1636 Fairview St / Berkeley, CA 94703
boxcutter@lists.riseup.net

BRISK WALK #1 / $1
5.5 x 8.5 - copied - 36 pgs.
Brisk Walk is the work of Matt Underfoot of Miami Beach, Florida, and is filled with tales of



punk summer fun, as well as a tirade against machismo, musings about travel and transportation, and some requisite record reviews. A solid first effort, even if it does run a bit thin in the graphic design department. (AV)
1000 South Shore Drive / Miami Beach, FL 33141
asheriv@bellsouth.net

BROKEN HIPSTER #1/ $1
4.5 x 5.5 - copied - 32 pgs
Is there something wrong with me that I love zines about people's illnesses? *Monozine*, and other's of the ilk are so great because instead of some narcissistic melodrama about girlfriends, busted up tours, and bike rides in the rain, they detail actual life and death difficulties and struggles. *Broken Hipster* tells the story of Emiko's sudden and misdiagnosed kidney failure, her experiences with dialysis, and her hopes of finding a transplant. It's more than a little touching without ever being cheesy or self-centered. I hope that the next issue details further details of her recovery. (CR)
2520 SE 43rd Ave #B / Portland, OR 97206

BROKEN PENCIL #25 / $4.95
8.5 x 11 - printed - 80 pages
A zine lovers dream, *Broken Pencil* is a review magazine for "independent publications in Canada and the world, including e-zines and recordings." There are, however, more than just reviews in this issue, as there is quite a bit of writing done by the *Broken Pencil* staff as well. This issue has focuses on questions of sexuality and "grrrl" culture, and features better writing than your average zine fare. Recommended.
PO Box 203 / Stn P / Toronto, ON M5S 257 / Canada

CHAIRMEN OF THE BORED #21 / $3 / free to prisoners
11 x 8.5 - copied - 32 pgs
More cut-and-paste ramblings, poetry and drawings straight from three punks all stuck in three prisons. There's a lot of talk about the boredom and crap that goes on within the prison system, and a lot of other stuff too. Get this zine and then give it to your friends, also write these guys some letters because they have some free time on their hands. (CH)
109 Arnold Ave / Cranston, RI 02905

CITY TRASH #17 & #19 / ?
5.75 x 8.25 - copied - 56 pgs
Subtitled "Magazine For Wild & Raw Rockin' Primitive Teens" and that's certainly what it is—feeding off the more garage and trash end of the punk spectrum both issues are filled to the brim with reviews of records and shows—plus interviews with The Indikation, Cool Jerks, Spider Rico, Belch, and Rocket Freundental. Cool. (MT)
c/o Mark Kuurman / Thorbeckelaan 65 / 7942 CM / Meppel / The Netherlands

COMPLETE CONTROL #12 / $3
8.5 x 7 - copied - 48 pgs
The bulk of this issue is reprinted from Greg's old columns in Richmond Indymedia and Slug & Lettuce. I like the format of this collection of stories about different towns and cities, always focusing on an activist, political, and collective perspective. The nice part is how Greg weaves his own experiences into the more subjective descriptions of local events, which keeps things both personal and intriguing. A solid read. (MD)
PO Box 5021 / Richmond, VA 23220

CONSTELLATIONS #13 / free
5.5 x 8.5 - copied - 26 pgs
The graphics in *Constellations* came out well; it's typed, with some cut and paste well put together. There's an interview with Phil Elvrum of The Microphones and Mathew Caws of Nada Surf. The interviews take up a large portion of the zine. The interview with Elvrum was asking more about him than the band, like what he was like as a kid, first childhood memories, dreams, stuff like that. In contrast, the Caws interview talked about Nada Surf, politics and some personal stuff. There's some poetry, a couple short stories and people thinking on paper. (ME)
PO Box 13078 / Long Beach, CA 90803
Constellaseven@yahoo.com

CONTESTAIRE #1 / $3 / trade / stamps
5.5 x 8.5 - copied - 84 pgs
There's some photography throughout this zine but it's hard to make out 'cause its all

home photocopied and typed cut-and-paste style against obscure magazine pages. *Contestaire* is a personal zine, packed with stories about real life experiences; there's trav-

eling with friends, having lice, working for recycling trucks, neighbors dieing, and dumb exboyfriends. The stories are short and sometimes in the form of poetry, but deep and cleverly written. It really makes you think about shit. While reading I got emotional, it's so well written that I felt like I was in the stories or that I knew the people in them. It's definitely worth checking out. (ME)
Shana Borenstein / PO Box 93 / Greenbush, MI 48738
gerbilstyle@yahoo.com

CONTRAVENÇAO #6 / ?
8.5 x 11 - printed - 24 pgs - Portuguese
This newsprint rag keeps chattering along, although it's hard to pinpoint the difference between a fiery and a droning speech when you don't really speak the language. I am again struck by how studiously the editors follow the basic *MRR/Heartattack* page design (which is fine except for the pixelization). In any case, *Contravençao* is working to represent the wider scene in Brazil. There are quite a few columns and reviews here, and interviews with Thee Butchers Orchestra, a hot rod-style band, and Cisco, a melodic hardcore band, both from São Paulo. (AC)
CP 2255 / São Paulo, SP, 01060-970 / Brazil
www.contravencaozine.com.br

CRYIN' IN MY BEER #1 / ?
8.5 x 5.5 - copied - 28 pgs
Not bad for a first issue. The art is ok, but the stories could use a little more cohesiveness. This issue is about the author's town Hastings, which is apparently a small, crappy town. I can appreciate this being a small town kid myself. I would definitely like to see future efforts. (CQ)
dariusmazhari1@hotmail.com

DESTROY #6 / $5
8.25 x 11.75 - printed - 60 pgs
Holy cow! Crust-o-rama!! Sixty pages of glossy, full metal jacket, d-beat powered, hard-fuk'n-core punk ! Interviews with Mike Beer City, Mad 3, Forca Macabra, Cathedral, Presto, MCR Records, SDS, Laughing Nose, Rupture, Slang, Bloody Sods, along with tons and tons of informed and well done reviews. Totally international in its focus and truly a work of total punk passion! Comes with a CD featuring Delta, Scumputer, Coaccion and Walsh St Cop Killers. Great! (MT)
PO Box 1122 / Bristol / BS99 2HX / England

DOGPRINT #3 / $2
11 x 8 - printed - 24 pgs - German
This is an excellent fanzine that is well laid out with cool graphics. There are interviews with Burial, Hellshock, Skraeck, Idiot Savant, Madame Germen, and Plague Mass. If you collect records and like seven inches then check out their mail order catalogue. You will be impressed. (HH)
Yellow Dog / PO Box 550208 / 10372 Berlin / Germany
dogprints@yellowdog.de

DOLL #206 / $5?
8.5 x 11 - printed - 162 pgs
Last time I reviewed this zine, I promised I would learn Japanese. Well, I haven't learned Japanese yet so I guess I will just have to give basically the same review I did then. If I could actually read Japanese, this would probably be a great zine, and even though I don't it's still pretty entertaining. This issue has a history of the Germs and the LA punk scene. There's interviews, reviews, and lots of great pictures. Check it out. (CQ)
NO 303 Aota Bldg / 3-1-9, Kita, Kohenji / Suginami-Ku / Tokyo / Japan

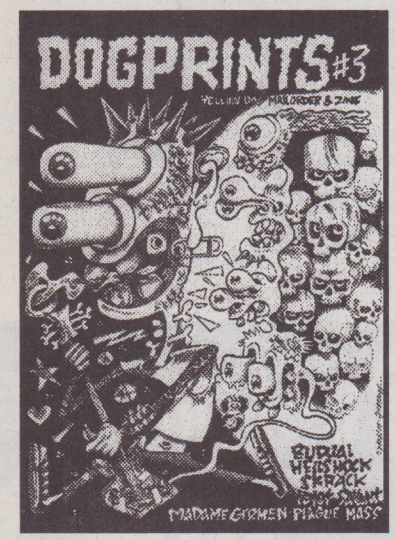
DUMP SITE #1 / $5
8.5 x 11 - printed - 44 pgs.
Dump Site is a collection of Ivan Brun's art, which spans the last ten years. Some pieces first appeared as contributions to indie comic books, others as graphics for zines, flyers, or album cover art. Brun has tackled a shitload of media over the years; the book showcases work with acrylics, pen and ink, simple line drawings, scratchboard, even some finger paintings! His subject matter is punk-fucking-rock when he wants it to be, but even that pushes past the usual skulls-and-monster shit and into some more complex territory. There are a lot of oppressed, existential figures walking headlong into maelstroms of shit, fire, and bayonets, but you'll also find stuff that's a little more subtle and mysterious: love and death face off, oblivious to mega jungle animals doing the same just a few feet away, a partially mummified woman dances at a punk show over empties and passed out dudes, wolves drive cars down steep hills in Paris. It's all part of Brun's weird take on civilization, and it's all highly recommended. (AV)
Black Screen Services Graphiques / Association Loi 190185 Bis Cours / Tolstoi / 69100 Villeurbanne / France
blackscreen@tiscali.fr

EARQUAKE #85 / $2
5.5 x 8 - copied - 26 pgs - French
The 85th issue—85 issues!—of this straightforward regular. This time around Frédéric interviews English ska band Pama International and the Riffs. As usual, *Earquake*'s strength lies in its well-prepared and well-written reviews of punk books, punk zines, and punk records. (AC)
Frédéric Leca / 55, rue Saint Jean / 88300 Neufchâtel / France

EAST VILLAGE INKY #24 / $2
4.25 x 5.5 - copied - 40 pgs
East Village Inky is a lady's writings about her two kids, and how one of her kids has three thumbs, and the lady is almost forty years old. It's sort of like an entire run-on sentence and that makes this zine hard to follow sometimes if you're like me and don't have the greatest attention span or don't read something all the way through in an entire sitting. The drawings are cute and to I also think it would be pretty chaotic and unpredictable to be a mom (and a dad too), so it follows that East Village Inky would read pretty much just like that. (CH)
PO Box 22754 / Brooklyn, NY 11202
www.ayunhalliday.com

EAVES OF ASS #3 / $2, trade
5.5 x 7 - copied - 28 pgs
Some funny stuff here: "The only good thing artists ever did was get killed by communists. Thanks for the free food and wine, asshole."

Also funny are pieces of "found" poetry, love songs, and raps, as well as a "found" A-B-C for adults (which starts at analingus and goes to zenophile). People leave the weirdest shit lying around, don't they. There is also a bizarre story about the editor doing a how-does-drinking-affect-your-sexuality study for money, and some other kind of random writing as well. Not a bad way to kill time on the bus or something. (GN)
Craven Rock / PO Box 20692 / Seattle, WA 98102 / eavesofass@yahoo.com



EVERYDAY RESISTANCE / $2
5.5 x 8.5 - copied - 44 pgs
This is the sort of zine that most of us think about doing and then, a year or two after we have safely slept our way out of it, shudder at the thought of. It's a classic DIY product with 'how-tos' on topics ranging from preventing cops from entering your house to how to beat a drug test. The cover has the classic molotov overturned car combo that is sure to appeal to its target audience but I find strangely out of place. The author seems overly fascinated with the apparent rebelliousness and necessity of smoking pot. As pleasurable as the reefer may be it is neither the lynch-pin to the revolution nor is it a particularly interesting thing to get popped for by the cops. As for overturning cars and lighting them on fire... (AR)
Microcosm Publishing / PO Box 14332 / Portland, OR / 97293

EVERYTHING YOU HATE #2 / £1 or $4
8.5 x 11 - copied - 24 pgs
British fanzine focusing on the more melodic and "post" realm of punk rock—interviews with Flamingo 50, Dirtblone, Automation—plus record reviews, show reviews and various opinion pieces. (MT)
EYH / 21 Stoddart Road / Walton / Liverpool / L4 6TR / United Kingdom

FINDING DATURA #3 / $2 or trade
5.5 x 8.5 - copied - 36 pgs
From what I understand, datura is a hallucinogenic plant that can be made into tea. I can only surmise that this means that the zine maker was on drugs. For example, the reviews in here are a little too indiscriminate for me. Perhaps when you're fucked up on hippie tea you can't tell what is punk and what is DIY say, raver or say, DIY electro-goth-noise. Maybe when you're toxically deluded you find yourself riding a lifelike wanking doll with real-looking pubes while pretending that its your gas station girlfriend, and you think that is the best story fodder around. What's shocking is how never once does the editor allude to the title or explain where one can find this obscure drug. Selfish. (JB)
Rob Monroe / PO Box 15 / Mishawaka, IN 46546

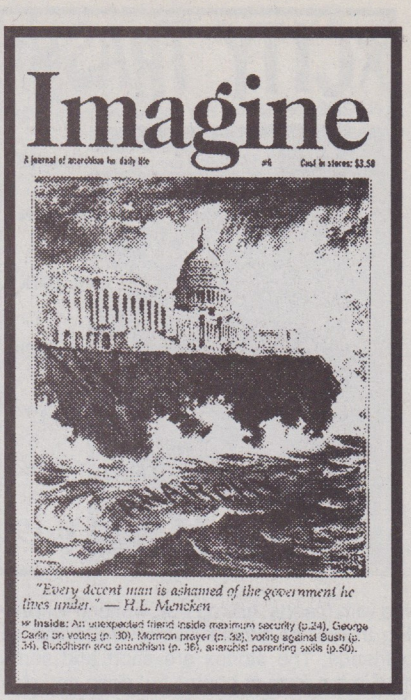
FLAKES #1 / $2
8.5 x 4.5 - handwritten - 16pgs
There's more than a little credit that has to be given to any zine written by a prisoner, and a hand written one really shows some remarkable determination, patience, and unfortunately time. This issue details a couple of unrelated experiences in seaside towns in Oregon filled with flaky friends, cheap beer, and weed. Even though it might not seem all that compelling, it's kind of hard not to read a zine like this all the way through. (CR)
Darren Hamby / 8276382 / 777 Stanton Blvd / Ontario, OR 97914

GHOST PINE #8 / $2
4.5 x 5.5 - copied – 44 pgs
A rather anonymous zine in the travel and personal vein, Jeff's stories cover his growing up in Canada, greyhound travels to Chicago, New York, and Montreal. It's a bit hard to care about a writer's travels if you never really feel that you get to know the person behind them. Not bad, but not remarkably better than the dozens of similarly written zines. (CR)
114 Canter Blvd / Nepan, ON / K2G-2M7 / Canada

IMPACT PRESS #52 / free in person, $2 by mail
8x10.5 - printed - 64pgs
Very socio-political. There's a four-page article on the life and presidency of Ronald Reagan, which is informative, especially for those of us who weren't yet born (raising my hand). There are reviews, mostly of CD releases with a few vinyl and DVD too. There is an "Activist Event Listings" in the back which is pretty cool. It's so people can get involved with what they believe in and have their voice heard! (ME)
PMB 361 / 10151 University Blvd / Orlando, FL 32817
Impactpress.com/editor@impactpress.com

INTELECTUAL PUNK #6 / $3
8 x 6 - copied - 44 pgs - Spanish
This is a sporadic, nine-year-old fanzine from Barcelona, Spain. There are a bunch of interviews including Modern Fucking Army, Los Makarras, Ti Carne, Restons Sobres, Agathocles, and others. There is also band info, record reviews, ads, columns, and scene reports. Both the front and back covers are totally cool! (HH)
Jaume Esteve Acosta / PO Box 13162 / 08080 Barcelona / Spain
Email: intelectualpunx@hotmail.com

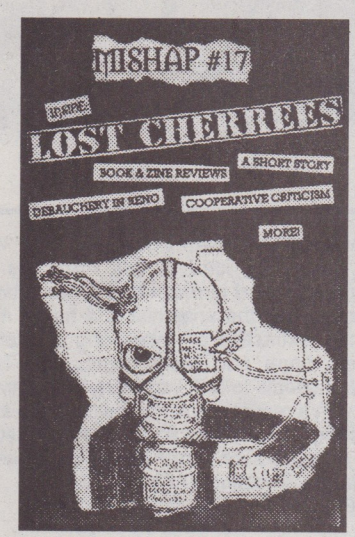
IT'S ALL GRAVY #7 / $1
5.5 x 8.5 - copied - 22 pgs.
It's All Gravy gives you a look inside of the L.A. punk scene through the eyes of the editor, Nick. Mostly show reviews printed on these pages, with a couple of interviews with bands such as Teenage Wasteland and All or Nothing H.C. This issue is not that bad. Keep up the good work. (MF)
Nick G / 312 W 8th St / Los Angeles, CA 90014
gravyzine@hotmail.com



HELP, MY SNOWMAN'S BURNING #7 / $4.50
8 x 6 - copied - 52 pgs
This has all the things I love about a zine—great art and graphics, personal writing, funny stories, vegan sweets recipes, a sense of humor, and no poetry. For those into home recording digital style, there are lists of free programs you can download off the web; writings of favorite television shows; interviews with artists Deth P Sun and Dan Broadwith; some fun tattoo flash; a how-to on dancing and much more. Fun! (MD)
PO Box 14562 / Kilbirnie, Wellington / New Zealand

LIVING MOBILE #3-04 / $1.50
8.5 x 11 - copied - 8 pages
Less of a zine and more of a newsletter, *Living Mobile* is self-proclaimed publication "for those who live free" in RVs, vans, cars, and unconventional vehicles, whatever those may be. Despite not being in the aforementioned category (where would I put my record player?), I was definitely into the earnest advice that J. and R. had for their fellow mobile livers. There are some straightforward pieces about doing laundry cheaply, "poopin, peein, and showerin," and winterizing their RV, as well as more theoretical musings on the relationship of debt and life in American society. While I don't quite agree that being in debt is akin to being "a SLAVE, "

(I find that tedious metaphor to be a bit overused and more than a bit questionable), it is hard not to agree with the gist of what J. and R. are getting at. It reminds me of the part in *Travels with Charley* when John Steinbeck writes about RV dwellers and their relationship with America. Interesting for sure. (GN)
J & R / #108 / York, Pennsylvania 17404



MISHAP #17 / $2-3 / trade
5.5 x 8.5 - copied - 48 pages
The best part of this zine by far is the interesting interview with the recently reformed Lost Cherees, who discuss their music, politics, and lives with intelligence and candor. Beyond that, the editor Ryan gives us a history of his zine (ten years and running!), reviews other zines and some books, and muses about life and anarchism. There is also a decent short story and a moderately entertaining "insecure loser's dictionary." More lighthearted and personable that the average anarcho-focused zine, my only complaint with *Mishap* is that it could stand to be edited down a bit. (GN)
PO Box 5841 / Eugene, OR 97405 / mishapzine@yahoo.com

THE NEW SCHEME #10 / free
8 x 10.5 – printed - 44pgs
An interview with Brian Kienien of The Bouncing Souls, Jeff Mitchell and Gabe Sharpiro of Volante, and Circle Take The Square. There are two articles, one about Challenger and the other about The Unicorns; The article about Challenger is a couple pages (with pictures) about how they formed, what they sound like, what they're trying to do with their music and how they are lyrically, though it mostly focuses on Al Burian's (guitar and vocals) point of view. The Unicorns article was even shorter (also with photos) and talks about what all the songs are like on their record, *Who Will Cut Our Hair When We're Gone?* There are also about eighteen pages of record reviews. (ME)
PO Box 7542 / Boulder, CO 80306
stuart@thenewscheme.com

NIGHT JAUNTS #2 / $1 or trade
8.5 x 5.5 - copied - 20 pgs
I love walking around aimlessly at night. But I always figured it would be boring for anyone else to ever read about. This zine, however, is actually pretty good. There is a really heart felt story about a friend wanting to commit suicide, and some other stories as well. Recommended if you like personal zines. (CQ)
PO Box 5841 / Eugene, OR / 97405

NOT A GAME #3 / $3
8.5 x 11 - copied - 24 pgs
What's with Canadians and doing good zines? It must be all the free time they have living in a socialist paradise—or maybe it's because they spend so much time trapped indoors while rabid moose and wolves stalk their city streets. Whatever it is, there certainly seems to be a good number well done hardcore punk zines being cranked out—*Not A Game* helps to confirm this theory. This time around we gots interviews with major label thick-heads No Warning, a Career Suicide Euro tour diary, reprints of the *MRR* Agnostic Front interview and a Crippled Youth interview from *Run It* circa 1986. Lotsa pictures of sweaty dudes piling on each other (which some might call hot...) and loads of reviews. Recommended for the hardcores for sure—though if you stud your jacket you might not like it too much. Nice busy yet readable cut'n paste layout. (MT)
59 Prince Edward Blvd / Thornhill, Ontario L3T 7G1 / Canada
notagamezine@hotmail.com

POOR & FORGOTTEN #20 / 2 stamps or trade
4.25 x 5.5 - copied - 10 pgs
Equal parts charming and depressing, while also so short that your attention span isn't challenged, I always enjoy this zine for its antics and for its intimacy. I think it is especially important to be pen pals with punk inmates because it takes a lot for them to stay connected. So get off your ass and write this guy! (JB)
Matthew Johnson #26564 / 5 Paul X Tivnan Dr / W Boylston, MA 01583-2126 / 8.9.4.

THE POSITIVE VEGAN #3 / trade
5.75 x 8.25 - copied - 34 pgs
Ok I need to apologize to Bridget, as I've taken forever to get to this quite positive, vegan sXe cooking zine—but it was only because I wanted to get a chance to cook up some of the treats described. *The Positive Vegan* cookzine (cause punx got to eat!) is sort of the X'd up offspring to classic punk

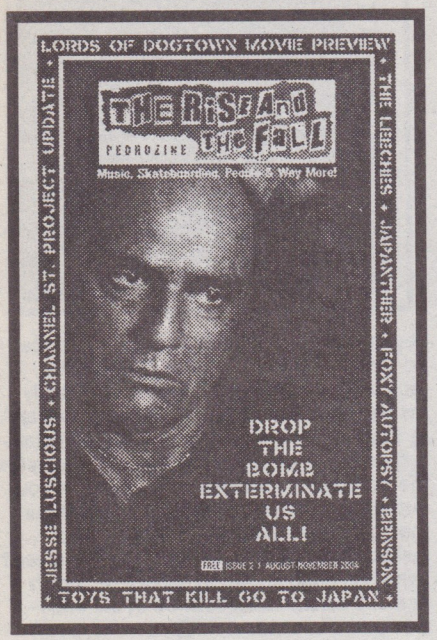
vegan cookzines like the decidedly intoxicated *Soy not Oi!* I will say this though—the recipes in *The Positive Vegan* are certainly tastier and not so simple as those presented in *Soy Not Oi!* —though part of the complexity for me had to do with sorting out the metric measurements for everything. Those of you outside the USA won't have to worry about that though—overall well done, detailed instructions that even a vegan oaf like myself (who has been known to subsist on brown rice and salsa) can follow. So in the end—totally recommended! (MT)
47 Chaucer St. / Moonee Ponds / Melbourne / VIC Australia 3039
xsquidgyx@minorthreat.com

THE PUTANG INA MO TURBOCORE ZINE
#2 / postage; free in Philippines
8.5 x 11 - copied - 4 pgs
This one contains an interview with Organ Grinder, from France, and *Akupunktura*, a Serbian zine in its 13th issue. Locally focused zines are cool, but it's also nice to see a cut-and-paste zine like this—which despite being so short, keeps up a strong connection with its peers across the world. (AC)
Jay Garcia / Cluster-M, Lot-72 / Bagong Nayon-1 / Antipolo City-1870 / Philippines
turbocore@lycos.com

RATCHARGE #1 / $1 or trade
5.5 x 8 - copied - 28 pgs - French
This is a real *fan*zine, bursting at the seams with unabashed love for such things as flyer art ("artwork volé) and such people as...Dennis Hopper. *Ratcharge* is cut and paste, handwritten, and full of references and exclamation points. It's sort of a *How Much Art Can You Take,* but slightly more comprehensible—even though it's in French. Editor Alex covers a lot of ground, with articles about Gasmask Terrör, Face Up To It, Destrucción, Regulations, and one in Spanish about *Dogtown and Z-Boys.* It's not unlikely that you'll love this. (AC)
Alex Simon / 57 Avenue du Général Morand / 91600 Savigny / Orge / France

RAUMSCHAFF WUCHERPREIS #15 / $5
11 x 8 - printed - 64 pgs - German
This is another excellent issue of scumfuck. Included within these pages is an interview

with the band Abwart, Germany's best ever-punk band from the 80s. There is a second interview with the band Stage Bottles, and an Irish scene report. The rest of the fanzine is record reviews, and a catalogue. Great place to check out what's happening! Oh yeah, the fanzine comes with a fifteen-song tribute to Joey Ramone performed by Guido Goettlich. (HH)
PO Box 100709 / 46527 Dinslaken / Germany
www.scumfuck.de



RENFIELD #12 / $4
11 x 8 - copied - 58 pgs - German
First let me say that this fanzine has lots of humor, so don't be offended. There are interviews with the bands El Bosso and the Ping Pongs, Tombstone Brawlers, Cockbirds, Desmond Dekker, and the Tueren (Doors). Cats always land on their feet when dropped, and buttered toast always lands on the buttered side down. What happens when they meet? Contact Tim for an answer, but be prepared to write an article for this looney fanzine. Oh yeah, it also comes with a free CD which is either light years ahead of it's time, or the final nail in the coffin of western civilization. (HH)
Tim Kegler / Danziger Str 102 / 10405 Berlin / Germany
studentim@hotmail.com

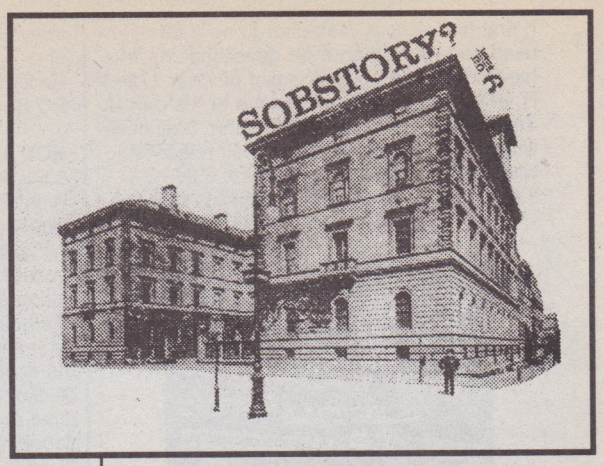
THE RISE & THE FALL #2 / free
5.5 x 8.5 - copied - 52 pgs
This is totally rad—complete San Pedro (their hometown as well as the home of the Minutemen) obsession here. Inside we have tales of Toys That Kill's Japanese tour, the local Channel St. Project, interviews with Japanther, the Leeches—but the best part of this whole damn issue is the interview with Mike Brinson. Who the hell is Mike Brinson? Remember *Another State Of Mind*? Remember the guy who kept dyeing his hair and ditched on the tour when everything went to shit in DC? *That's* Mike Brinson—he's just as obnoxious now as you probably thought he was in the movie, but the stories he tells are fucking great and they alone make this zine totally worth picking up. (MT)
PO Box 1794 / San Pedro, CA 90733-1794

SHOES #3 / $2
5.5 x 8.5 / copied / 100 pgs
There may be such a thing as too much content in one zine. The handwriting in this zine is pretty sloppy, which started to drive me crazy about 40 pages in. The writing is all over the place in style and subject. Most of it is a mish-mash of crazy travel stories from Canada, through the US, and a lot of pages spent in Mexico. The stories are for the most part really interesting, so if you enjoy travel zines, check this out. My complaint really is just that it was visually boring and a bit cumbersome to get through all of it. Next time, I'd suggest a little more editing and more attention to layout. (MD)
Nathan / PO Box 1986 / Corunna, Ontario / N0N 1G0 Canada

SOBSTORY? #6 / $2
5.5 x 4.25 - copied - 24 pgs
Aesthetically, this is pleasing to the eye. The written content consists of four letters between two people, a philosophical discourse on happiness and discontent and human existence. I must say it is a bit too pretentious for my tastes. (MD)
PO Box 170247 / San Francisco, CA 94117

SOLITARY EXISTENCE #1 / free / donation
5.5 x 8.5 / copied / 8 pgs
Solitary Existence is a meager and somber zine by Travis, who is serving time in prison. The writing expresses the frustration, isolation, and depression of being locked away; one has to appreciate the effort put into getting this self-expression out. It's a little too gutter-punk-doofus-mentality for my tastes at times (example: "heaven would be a punk show inside a building made of kegs of PBR and Guinness while al the chicks run around topless in the pit"), but I think the work that Fanorama is doing to give a voice to prisoners is great. (MD)
109 Arnold Avenue / Cranston, RI 02905
fanorama1@aol.com

STIR KRAZY #8 / $3
8.5 x 11 - copied - 26 pgs
Anyone who experiences this zine will spend a lot of time trying to parse the cover. What in the hell does it mean? With an apparent Japanese flag backdrop and an American flag on the floor sits a pouty woman naked from the waist down bleeding from her graphically drawn orifice onto said flag. Additional context is provided by sidebars proclaiming "No Gods,

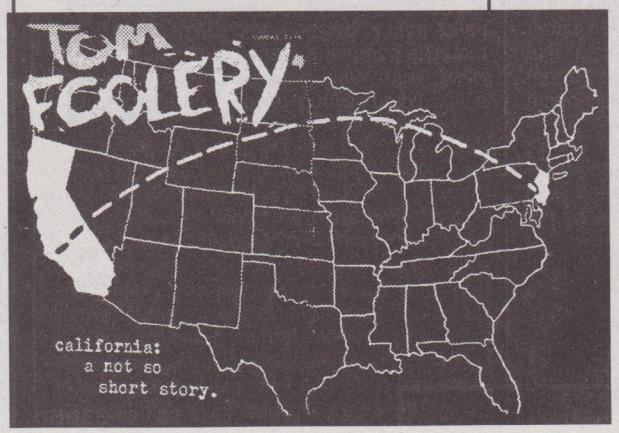


No Masters" and "New Dawn of Liberty." What the fuck?! The idea of this magazine has always appealed to me in that is has attempted to overlap the anarchist and heavy metal scenes, extracting an interesting distillate of surreal hope and futile angst. This issue instead seems to drift into more topical trajectory with a reprint of a intra-cop dialogue about "Policing Dissent" and some reprints of stupid shit pulled out of some Utne Reader-esque magazine. Puzzling. (AR)
PO Box 25148 / Rochester, NY / 14625

TOINEN VAIHTOEHTO #175 / $2
8 x 6 - printed - 28 pgs - Finnish
Get this fanzine for more punk rock from Finland. It contains lots of record reviews, reflections on Provinssirock the Upea Festival, the Kohu-63 European tour, and some band interviews. Fuck bar codes, automobiles and war! But, whatcha gonna do? Check out *Toinen Vaihtoehto*, a real dose of Finnish punk. (HH)
PL 1 / 65200 Vaasa / Finland
jantsa@yahoo.com

TOM FOOLERY #5 / $1
2.25 x 4 - copied - 52 pgs
This one is a tiny zine with a big story of moving to the opposite coast to follow a dream and then having everything go terribly wrong. It's pretty well written, though it could have used some editing. For fans of personal zines with an emo bent. I'm not sure about the price, so you may want to get in touch via e-mail before you send your dough. (MD)
Jeffrey Pelly / 753 Amsterdam Rd / Mount Laurel, NJ 08054
jeffpelly@aol.com

TOWN OF HARDCORE #9 / $1
8,5 x 11 - copied - 28 pgs
Considering I am not up to date on the current sXe scene, I wasn't sure what to expect with *Town Of Hardcore*. The editorial rant about how people shouldn't start bands because there are already too many bad bands out there could equally be applied (if not more so) to the zine scene, ever consider that? The interviews are in depth and focus on the scene, politics, and personal questions (my favorite is Q: "What's it like being married and being into hardcore? A: Being married is a lot better than having a girlfriend because she's stuck with you."),

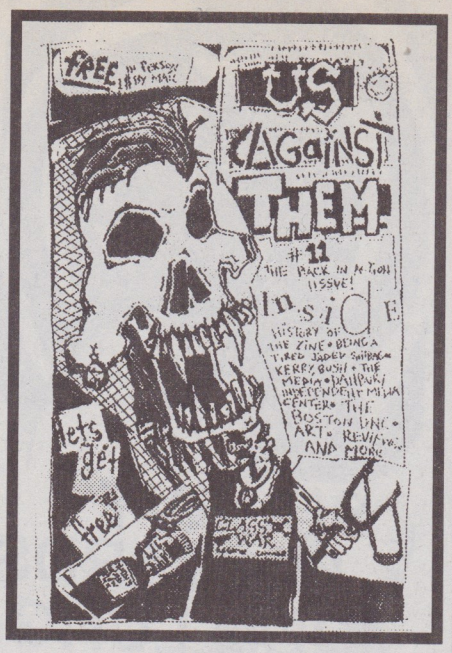


and feature Think I Care, Righteous Jams, Fucked Up and Krakdown. The last band goes completely unchallenged when they say, "We try not to talk about that (racism) anymore. We just really want to stem away from that whole thing and go back to the subject that is really what hardcore is all about: having a good time."—right on dudes! There are show reviews (Youth Of Today, yawn) and tour diaries of sorts. Well, the good news is sXe hardcore is alive and well. The bad news is sXe hardcore is alive and well. (MD)
No address, if you are hardcore enough this will find its way into your hands

TRY TO WAKE UP WITH A SMILE ON YOUR FACE #1 / $.50 or trade
4.5 x 6 - copied - 28 pgs
Brief yet interesting zine in which one Gerki interviews varying straight edgers worldwide on their take on sXe, focusing on the radical political potential end of the edge scene rather than the one that blindly shouts "Mosh you pussies!" Also included is a German scene report, zine reviews and an interview with Ed Hannon who does a zine trading network called "Spudmonkey's Zine Trade." Pretty cool. (MT)
PF 1133 / 17221 Neustrelitz / Germany
smallbutangry@suiciety.de

TURNING THE TIDE Vol.17 #2 / $2
11 x 17 - printed - 16 pgs
You know what you get with *Turning The Tide*: anti-racist analysis and reprints (emphasis on the reprints) from the longest running periodical of the ARA scene. This issue covers schools, hip-hop, poverty, and the prison system. The stand out in this issue is Novick's (the editor) analysis of what the role of electoral politics is in any movement towards social change with an intelligent and non-partisan anti-electoral position being reached. (AR)
POB 1055 / Culver City, CA / 90232

UNE VIE POUR REIN? #6 / $5
11 x 8 - printed - 68 pgs - French/English
One will probably want to get a haircut before reading this committed skinhead fanzine.

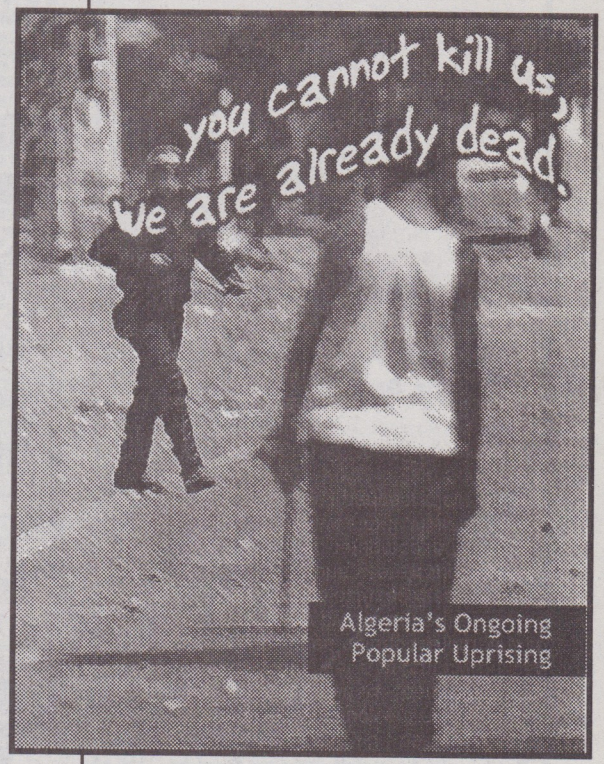


There are interviews with Fabrizio Barile, an old time Italian skin, the Janitors, the Last Resort, Hardtimes, Dropkick Murphys, and others. The best interview for me is with the French band Berrurier Noir, an eighties band who were not skinheads. There are also lots of ads and some record reviews. Shave your head, and chant Oi! Oi! Oi! (HH)
BP 80 138 / 75 623 Paris Cedex 13 / France
benjamos@yahoo.com

US AGAINST THEM #11 / $1
5.5 x 8.5 - copied - 34 pgs
Totally punk, totally political—*Us Against Me* is one persons attempt to reconnect the dots between living the chaos and yet still being productive and having a political consciousness... honestly ten years ago there where tons of zines like this floating around with page after page of punks venting against this shit fucking system. Attempting to find the connections between us and the motivation to do what we can to stay sane in an insane world. It may not be smarty pants enough for those who seemingly need to cite and over intellectualize everything, but I certainly enjoy reading this. (MT)
PMB 60 / 595 W Main St / Norwich, CT 06360

VOICES WAKE US #12 / $1
8.5 x 11 - copied - 8 pgs
Ben graces us with another edition of his well thought out, albeit slightly over intellectualized reviews centered fanzine. For the unfamiliar, *Voices Wake Us...* focuses on the crustier, charged and spiked end of the punk spectrum—combining it with, what is probably, an unhealthy obsession with black metal. Ben's reviews are well done, articulate and show a real appreciation for the music he's covering. (MT)
5290 Lerner Hall / New York City, NY 10027

YOU CANNOT KILL US, WE ARE ALREADY DEAD / $3
8.5 x 11 - copied - 46 pgs
This is fucking fantastic and you must get a copy now! The insurgency in Algeria (2001-?) has been the most interesting and exciting uprising on the globe since the 'Battle of Seattle' and is far more encompassing than the anti-globalization movement has been. Our knowledge of these events has been seriously hampered by the lack of English language reporting on them. Most of the news in the radical milieu has been through translations done out of Italy. *You Cannot Kill Us, We Are Already Dead* compiles all of the English analysis of the events of Algeria over the past 3 years and couples it with new material that I had not seen to paint an excellent portrait of what has been happening. Here are two quotes: "By the end of the first week of May, the insurgent movement began to organize itself in village and neighborhood assemblies (the 'arsh) that coordinated their activities through a system of delegates who would be bound to a very interesting 'Code of Honor' a few months later." And from the Code: "5. Never use the movement for partisan ends, and never tarnish it by manipulating people in order to solicit votes for an electoral competition or for any other possibility of obtaining power, 7. Never accept a political position (elected or appointed) in an institution of power." This is an absolutely important report from one of the most exciting international events happening today. (AR)
Firestarter / PO Box 50217 / Baltimore MD 21211



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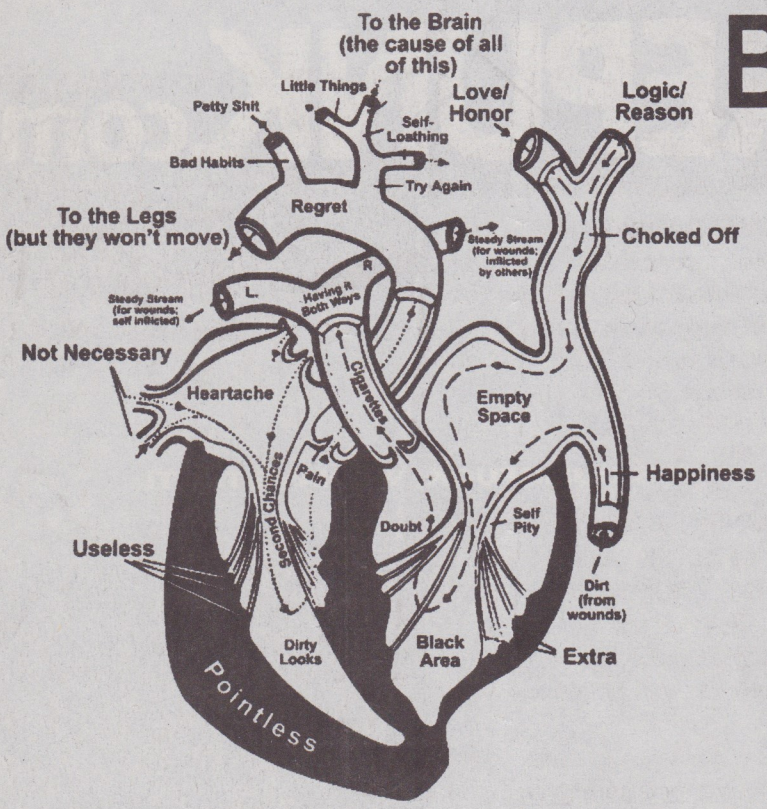

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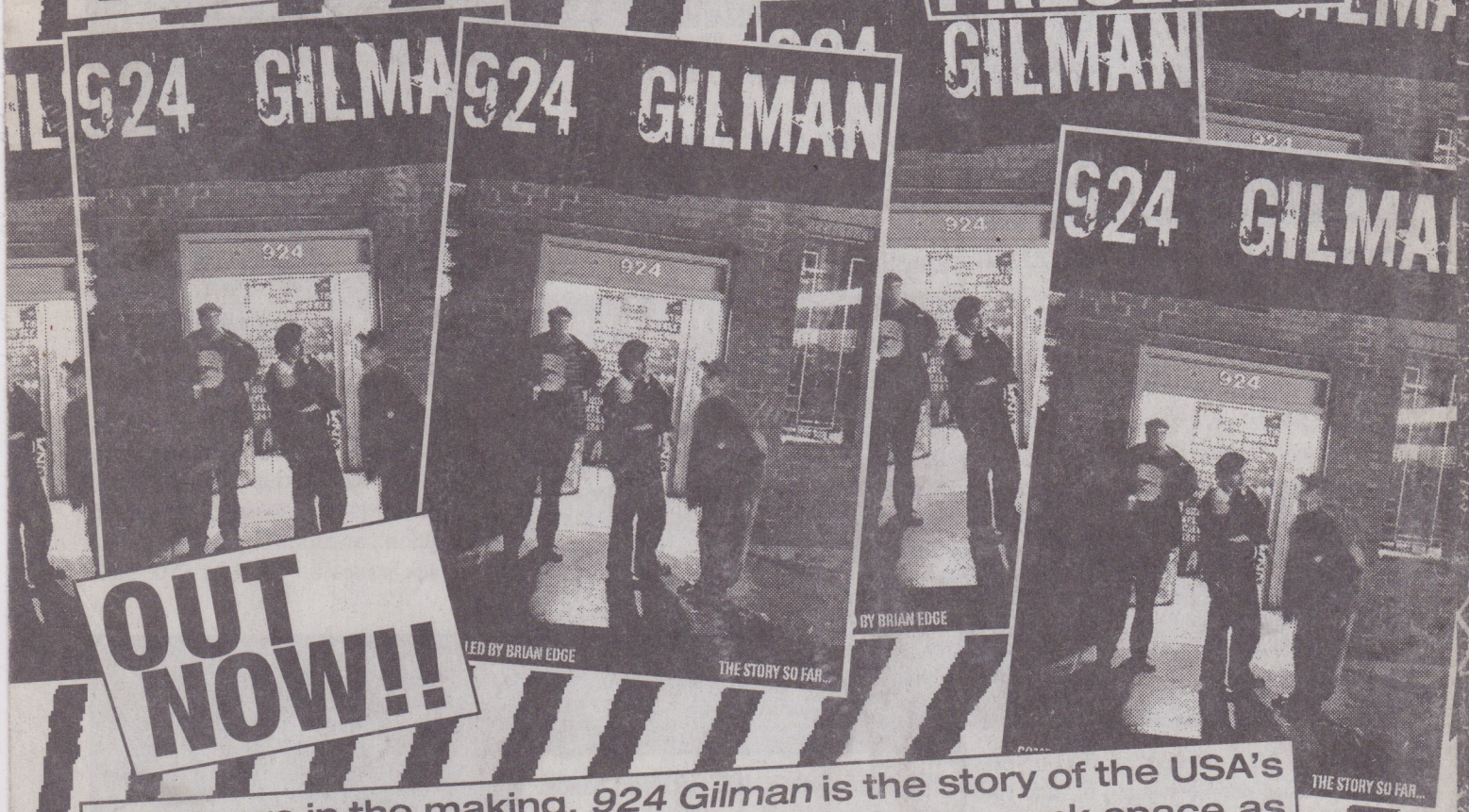

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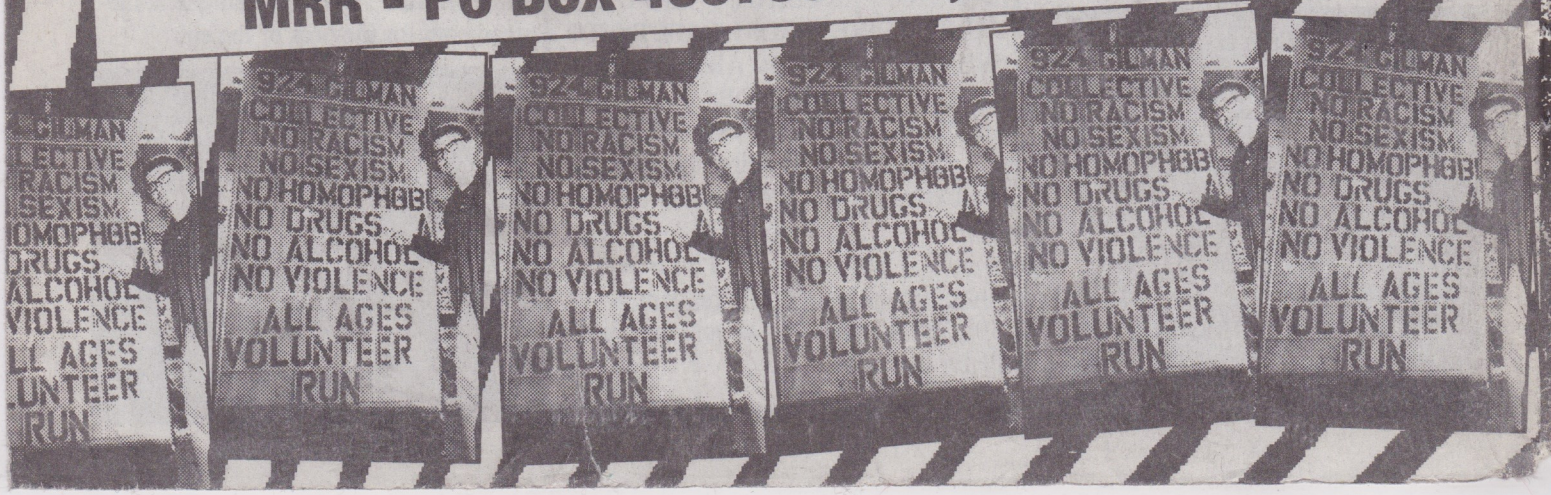
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